



WHEN VOTES COUNT:

Yiaga Africa Watching the Vote Report on the
2020 Edo and Ondo Governorship Elections.

When Votes Count: Yiaga Africa Watching The Vote Report on the 2020 Governorship Election in Edo and Ondo State

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Yiaga Africa is enhancing the quality of democracy in Nigeria using Watching The Vote as a platform for promoting cutting-edge electoral policies, credible elections, civic participation and democratic consolidation. Yiaga Africa has been involved in election observation since 2007 and it is one of the leading organizations working on elections in Nigeria.

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Cynthia Mbamalu
Director of Programs
Yiaga Africa



Executive Summary

The Edo and Ondo governorship elections in 2020 were the first state-wide elections conducted in a pandemic in Nigeria. The elections were conducted amidst intensifying concerns for public health safety with both states experiencing rising numbers of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the period leading to the elections. Both elections were significant for different reasons and were important in the electoral democracy journey of Nigeria. First, Nigeria marked twenty-one years of democracy in 2021, emerging from its sixth electoral cycle with the 2019 elections providing a very controversial outcome and questioning the commitment of the political class to the development of democracy in Nigeria. Secondly, these were the first governorship elections after the 2019 general elections and the Bayelsa and Kogi state governorship elections all conducted in 2020. Nigeria lost the opportunity to consolidate the various efforts to invest in building the electoral process in the 2019 general elections. The subsequent Kogi and Bayelsa elections were riddled with major infractions as citizens' rights to vote were threatened with the high incidence of election violence, disruption of the process and partisan use of state institutions by both the federal and state government. The elections in Edo and Ondo presented another opportunity for INEC to build citizen confidence both in elections in Nigeria and in INEC as the Election Management Body. Thirdly, the elections were to serve as a benchmark for the assessment of INEC's improvement on its processes and the commitment to ensuring that the investment in building Nigeria's electoral democracy is yielding some results. This was also important because both elections were to provide important information that will inform electoral reforms in Nigeria. Lastly, these were the first state-wide elections to be conducted by INEC in a pandemic which created new realities that the world grappled to adjust to. The ability of INEC to effectively manage the elections was to be significant in assessing INEC's capacity nationally and its leadership within the region.

On these premises, the Edo and Ondo state elections were conducted amidst intensifying concerns for public health safety and electoral

integrity. The unprecedented cases of pre-election violence and politically motivated conflicts at both intra-party and inter-party levels from the party primaries through the campaign period created a tension-filled election environment with potency to escalate during the elections. However, contrary to the worrying indicators for violence and the escalation of the COVID-19 virus that characterised the pre-election environment, the Election Day processes and outcome were adjudged positively and enjoyed wide citizens reception. This was possible because of the various levels of intervention in the pre-election phase and the commitment of INEC to proceed with specific innovation to enhance transparency in the process. Noteworthy were the critical policy reforms by INEC like the INEC Policy on Conducting Elections in the Context of COVID-19 and the Voter Code of Conduct on Voting Amidst COVID-19. These policies were important as they contributed to stakeholders' confidence in INEC and support to the conduct of elections in the pandemic. In addition, INEC introduced innovations to deploy technology in the result collation and transmission process with the deployment of the Z-Pad technology and the INEC Result Viewing (IREV) Portal. The ability to upload polling units level results on the IREV was a game-changer in the Edo and Ondo elections as it enhanced citizens' oversight role over the process and enabled transparency in the process.

While the elections received popular support, they were not perfect elections. The assessment of the quality of elections cannot be limited to the voting process but must extend to both the quality of different election activities in the electoral process beginning from the pre-election phase and the activities of key actors in the electoral process. Yiaga Africa's Watching the Vote in assessing the elections adopts a comprehensive electoral cycle approach informed by observation findings from the pre-election environment observation, election day observation and post-election engagement. Accordingly, key learnings and lessons from the Edo and Ondo elections in 2020 include:

1 | Political and electoral reforms are essential for political stability

Reforming the electoral process is a critical component in political reforms and democratic consolidation. The absence of a credible electoral process that guarantees free, fair and participatory competition and citizens participation undermines the importance of legitimacy in democratic governance. A credible electoral process founded on an effective trusted and democratic legal framework is fundamental in regulating contest for election, participation and behaviours during elections which over time creates a political culture capable of influencing sustainable democracy. Electoral reforms should be people-driven, futuristic and context informed.

2 | Democratic elections are contingent on positive attitudinal changes on the part of the political class

The spate of violence observed in the pre-election phase indicates the political class will rather indulge in strong-arm tactics to win elections rather than build credible campaign strategies and manifestoes. Nigeria's electoral democracy cannot be sustained by the culture of impunity of the political class and the resolve by politicians to deploy violence, heat up the politics, procure support through arms and purchase votes.

3 | Political exclusion undermines democratic legitimacy

The political party primaries were once again a money-driven process, with the exorbitant cost of nomination and an outcome that did not result in an equitable representation of women as candidates in the elections. The more political parties fail to institutionalize democratic processes and reduce the cost of nomination, the lesser the opportunity for credible and competent candidates to emerge. Nigerians are often left with limited choices in the elections. In addition, the continued exclusion of women through exclusionary practices and undemocratic party structures will continually stagnate democratic development.

4 | Money politics accentuates electoral corruption

The elections in Edo and Ondo saw a worrying trend of voter inducement in the pre-election phase and vote-buying on election day. The constant influence of money in elections in Nigeria raises major issues of legitimacy for elected officials. It threatens the fabrics of a developing democracy like Nigeria and the hope for a democratic society.

5 | Election technology promotes transparency and enables participation

Citizens have more trust in a system when they are empowered to take agency and provide independent oversight. The introduction of the INEC Result Viewing Portal was largely welcomed. However, INEC must ensure it creates an early citizen engagement strategy to discuss innovation before deployment and also integrate feedback channels.

6 | Expand voter access to polling units

The continued lack of expansion of polling units in Nigeria is inimical to the right to vote of citizens who are excluded from participation because of lack of access to polling units. This includes access with respect to distance to polling units, location of the polling units, access due to lack of provision for persons with disabilities and other special groups, and access to participate without the secrecy of the vote compromised.

7 | Inter-agency collaboration enables effective election security

Election security is dependent on effective collaboration by the different security agencies working with INEC. The conduct of security personnel deployed is dependent on the quality of training and welfare package provided to the personnel deployed and coordination between the agencies especially informed by the decisions at the Inter-agency Consultative Committee on Election Security.



Recommendations

Executive

- 1** The executive should prioritize electoral reforms and constitutional amendment by ensuring a harmonious relationship with the National Assembly to achieve a timely review of the legal framework for elections in Nigeria
- 2** The executive should ensure that the process of reforms of our laws is people-driven and inclusive of minority voices, women, youth and persons with disabilities by placing demands on the National Assembly to incorporate priority citizens agenda for electoral reform.

National Assembly

- 3** The National Assembly should expedite the electoral reforms process by ensuring the passing of the new Electoral Act before the 2021 Anambra governorship election. The observation of the Edo and Ondo elections provides important learnings that require the National Assembly to prioritize key citizens proposal in the new Electoral Act which include:
 - Legalize electronic voting and accreditation, electronic collation and transmission of results as a complementary process to the manual process
 - Provide limitation on cost of nomination for political party primaries
 - Guarantee political inclusion of women and persons with disabilities in the election through the candidate's list and delegate selection process during primaries
 - Provide stringent penalties for electoral offences and establishment of the Electoral Offences Tribunal and Commission
 - Introduce early voting for Nigerians on essential election duty
 - Provide proper regulation of the conduct of security personnel on election duty
 - Provide voting rights for Nigerians in the diaspora
 - Legalize the use of the Code of Conduct and Rules of Engagement to regulate security personnel deployed during the elections.
- 4** In the interest of building trust and inspiring citizens' confidence in the electoral process, the National Assembly should provide realistic timelines for passing the Electoral Act and ensure consistency in providing information on the process to citizens and in engaging citizens.

Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

- 5** INEC should further improve on its processes and deepen the adoption of technology in the electoral processes.
- 6** INEC should commence the process of increasing voter access to polling units through the establishment of additional polling units as required in the Electoral Act. This also includes ensuring accessibility of polling units to marginalized groups, especially persons with disabilities and women.
- 7** INEC should improve on INEC Result Viewing Portal (IREV), by ensuring the availability of election data in machine readable format that is easy to analyse.

- 8** | The secrecy of the ballot continues to be a challenge, violating the fundamental rights of voters to exercise their democratic choice without inhibition. INEC must ensure that voters can cast their ballots with their choice free from scrutiny.
- 9** | INEC should ensure a comprehensive post-election audit of the Edo and Ondo governorship elections. This should include identifying incidents of malpractices and non-compliance with guidelines in the process and reports of dereliction of duty on the part of INEC officials deployed. The findings should be made public.

Political Parties

- 10** | Political parties should institutionalize the conduct of transparent and democratic primaries. This should include a downward review of the total cost for candidate nomination.
- 11** | Political parties and candidates should commit to ensuring the violence-free campaign and promote voter education in the electoral process.
- 12** | Parties are encouraged to deepen their internal party democracy and to make genuine efforts to ensure the emergence and participation of marginalized groups including youth, women and PWD both as leaders within the parties and as candidates during elections.

Security Agencies

- 13** | Security agencies should improve communication on their electoral security mapping and electoral violence mitigation efforts as a means of enhancing citizens confidence in the elections.
- 14** | Security agents on election duty should be vigilant and proactive and ensure prompt response to critical incidents around the voting and results collation areas, especially violent disruption of the process and undue interference by thugs.
- 15** | Security agencies should continue to support their personnel with training and education in advance of the future electoral exercise.
- 16** | Additionally, the security agencies, INEC and the judiciary must make examples of those who deliberately undermine Nigeria's aspirations for inclusive, free, fair, credible, peaceful and transparent elections.

CSOs and Media

- 17** | Citizens should remain resilient as active participants in the process and remain resolute in placing demands on both the National Assembly and the executive for the passage of the new Electoral Act and constitutional reforms for democratic governance.
- 18** | Citizens are encouraged to appreciate the value and power in their votes on election day and refrain from money-driven/motivated participation in the democratic processes at the cost of national development.
- 19** | CSOs and media should continue to explore cost-effective voter education initiatives and invest in early voter education campaigns, especially in underserved communities.
- 20** | CSOs working on elections are encouraged to continue to explore opportunities that promote standardization of election observation and reporting that meets accepted standards on electoral integrity.
- 21** | CSOs and the media should prioritize the demand for electoral reforms that truly captures the priority issues for citizens and leverage each others' platforms to mobilize citizens' voices in the electoral reform process.

Traditional Institution

22 Traditional leaders should charge their people and political actors to conduct themselves and refrain from acts of violence and destruction in the electoral process.

Development Partners

23 Development partners should continue to provide support for civil society organizations to provide oversight of the electoral process.

24 Development partners should continue to provide both technical and budgetary support to the election management body (INEC).



Yiaga Africa Program Officer, Gabriel Prince During Training on Election Observation

A photograph of two men in a meeting. The man on the left is wearing a white shirt, a white cap, glasses, and a yellow face mask. The man on the right is wearing a blue shirt and a blue face mask, and is pointing towards the right. The background shows a room with a whiteboard and a door.

CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION



1.1

The Electoral Context

Elections are central in the journey to the realisation of democratic governance as they serve both the purpose of ensuring transition in government and empower the people to participate in the selection of their leaders. The centrality of an election in a democracy is fathomed as a non-negotiable pillar in a democracy which directly or indirectly impacts the quality of governance. While the frequency or the conduct of the election is not synonymous with the presence of democracy or democratic governance, it is an indication of the presence of a process enabling the free exercise of will for the people. The conduct of elections is as sacrosanct as the presence of governance in any system. However, with the outbreak of the pandemic the opportunities for the conduct of elections became limited with the introduction of public health measures to control the spread of the coronavirus. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic caused a public health crisis in 2020 and created a

tough reality for both developed and developing democracies. While nations battled with the public health, economic and human rights crisis caused by the pandemic, there was also the major challenge of conducting an election, which is largely dependent on human activities.

By March 2020, several countries were already facing different levels of lock-down orders imposed as a measure to limit the spread of the virus. Nigeria was not left out as the increase in the number of confirmed cases led to the imposition of lock-down order limiting any form of public gathering, physical engagement and travels. The outbreak of COVID-19 in Nigeria and the new executive orders imposed raised major concerns around conducting the September and October 2020 off-cycle governorship elections in Edo and Ondo States, as well as other outstanding bye-elections. There were concerns by stakeholders at

different levels about the ability of INEC to conduct elections amidst the pandemic and with lapses in delivery of healthcare services.

For Nigeria, this was uncharted territory, as the country did not have any prior experience handling elections during a pandemic. The closest since 1999 was conducting elections amidst a state of emergency as was the case in states in North-East Nigeria in 2015. The pandemic posed daunting problems for the EMB. The biggest challenge was whether to postpone or proceed with the elections as scheduled, bearing in mind that the outbreak of the virus was not preempted, and was spreading fast. Also of concern was the allowable time frame and provisions of the constitution for the Commission to conduct an election for the office of the Governor and carry its duties as stipulated. The question of time was already defined in the constitution in Section 178(2) which provides that “an election to the office of the Governor of a State shall be held on a date not earlier than 150 days and not later than 30 days before the expiration of the term of office of the last holder”. The implication of the constitutional time limit for the conduct of an election was that a further delay beyond the timeline stipulated in the constitution will create a constitutional crisis. Regardless of the pandemic, INEC had the arduous task of identifying possible scenarios for the conduct of elections amidst a pandemic within established public health safeguard measures.

The pandemic heightened the already difficult challenges of conducting credible elections, under a politically charged and hostile environment in Edo and Ondo. In addition, the 2020 governorship elections were to be conducted against the backdrop of highly contrived elections in Kogi and Bayelsa states that were characterised by violence, malpractice and fraud. With the pandemic came health-threatening situations, devastating economies, and increasing threats of hunger and insecurity all of which had the potency to impact the quality of participation and the election.

In May 2020, INEC released its timeline and schedule of activities as part of preparations for the September 19 governorship election in Edo state and began its planning in earnest. This was later followed with the publication of the INEC “Policy on Conducting elections in the Context of the COVID_19 Pandemic.” The new policy framework regulating the conduct of elections in Nigeria provided for the INEC to leverage technology

more in some of the INEC’s processes that would ordinarily require an in-person contact and also to regulate the conduct of electoral activities. In collaboration with the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on COVID-19, the Commission committed to providing infrared thermometers in all polling units, registration area centres, local government collation centres and the state collation centre in Edo State. The commission provided face masks and alcohol-based hand sanitisers for all Election Officials, methylated spirit and cotton wool for cleaning of the surface of the smart card readers upon usage by voters and the provision of water and sanitisation points across all voting and results in collation centres.

In the months and weeks leading up to the election, the political tension in Edo was heightened, divisive rhetoric and campaigns of calumny escalated from the point of political party primaries. The unhealthy contest between the All Progressive Congress (APC) and the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) candidates was an outcome of the previous battle as the two leading candidates in 2016 and the outcome of the 2020 primary election. The incumbent Governor; Godwin Obaseki had won his election in 2016 under the APC and served as a Governor of the APC. Events changed when the Governor was unable to contest at the Primaries of the APC after the screening for the APC primary election in July 2020 that alleged inconsistency with his certificates. The aggrieved Governor switched sides and moved to the PDP with the 2016 PDP candidate Pastor Ize Iyamu wooed by the APC to serve as the party’s candidate. While 13 political parties fielded candidates in the election, the battle for the seat of power was in reality a battle between the Pastor Iye Izamu of the APC and Godwin Obaseki of the PDP. Candidates for APC and PDP were popular among the populace given that they both contested in the 2016 Governorship election. The contest was also about political leadership in the South-South geopolitical zone especially with the APC losing the governorship seat in Bayelsa state.

Pastor Ize Iyamu, the candidate for APC in the 2020 contest, was the candidate for PDP in the 2016 election while the incumbent, Godwin Obasaki was the flagbearer for the APC in the 2016 election. The switch in party allegiance by both leading candidates heated the polity alongside the politics of division and hate. The power tussle between the dominant parties presented different dynamics and narratives for the election, the election witnessed contentious party primaries and candidate

selection process, intra-party conflicts and fractionalizations. The pre-election phase saw spates of violent rhetoric, hate speech, vandalism, and violence as captured in the pre-election observation. The state also witnessed a surge in the activities of cult groups. This was relatively due to a subculture of violence built around 'strongmen', thugs, touts, gangsters, and cultists, and the common perception that elections cannot be won without stronger strategies and the assistance of powerful thugs. The violence was escalated with the proliferation of small arms and other weapons, which was evident in the free use of firearms at campaign venues, the situation in the build-up to the election became direr. Thirteen (13) of the eighteen (18) local government areas were identified as potential hotspots and flashpoints of violence in the pre-election phase. With the increase in youth unemployment and the hardship caused by the pandemic, political leaders had a breeding ground for hiring young political thugs enabled by especially with the increase in activities of cult groups.

The apparent threat of electoral violence raised a lot of concern amongst key stakeholders. This informed the intervention of the National Peace Committee led by General Abdulsami Abubakar and the Oba of Benin, His Royal Majesty Oba Ewaure II. The intervention led to the official commitment to a Peace Accord by the candidates and (by extension) their supporters

In Ondo state, the governorship election drew interest from a wide range of stakeholders and observers for historical reasons. For one, Ondo State has a volatile electoral history, which dates back to the second republic. Its profile in electoral violence is easily traced to the pandemonium following the 1983 election when the politics in the state ascended to the national limelight as the state became an epicentre of national unrest and carnage. An ogre of violence and crises had ensued, following disputations from outcomes of the election, pitching supporters of Akin Omoboriowo of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) against supporters of Adekunle Ajasin of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). The outcome was bloodshed and destruction of properties across the state. The antecedents of electoral processes in the state, therefore, explained the attention being directed at the October 10, 2020, election in the state.

In more recent times, particularly in the fourth

republic, Ondo State has also not been spared of election-related tension. Aside from the general dynamics of the democratic process with an electoral process that has been violence-prone, there has been palpable apprehension over the desperation of political gladiators in the state regarding outcomes of supposedly competitive election processes. Party politics, in particular, has been conducted with highly confrontational tactics; thus, spurring concerns on potentials to generate or aggravate insecurity by stoking violence, undermine the credibility of election outcomes, or even mar the efficiency of institutional actors in the task of administering elections in the state. More so, the poll was not only to be seen as a barometer for assessing the strength and influence of regional and local political power blocs, but it was also perceived as an opportunity by the actors to lay out a groundwork as a grand strategy towards the 2023 presidential election.

The 2020 governorship election in Ondo State was mainly a contest between Eyitayo Jegede of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the incumbent governor, Rotimi Akeredolu of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) just like 2016- featuring the two dominant parties and other smaller parties. While governor Akeredolu hinges his second term ambition on what he termed his outstanding performance in education, health, industrialization, agriculture, job creation, economic recovery, and prosperity as well as massive infrastructural development, (Akingboye, 2020) Eyitayo Jegede promised to "establish a seaport, tackle schools dropout syndrome affecting children, empower youths, and bring integrity to politics in the state". (Alachenu, 2020). The governorship election became a very significant litmus test in what could be a barometer to gauge the political mood and chances of some actors in the 2023 general elections. Expectedly, the gubernatorial poll elicited divergent speculations among stakeholders, observers and other pundits as concerns mounted on the prospects and challenges of a hitch-free, peaceful, free, and fair election in the state. There were also security and institutional concerns with the potentials to affect the efficiency and credibility of electoral management processes in the poll. Yiaga Africa commenced its election observation early with the observation of pre-election activities of the major actors- INEC, political parties, security agencies, voters and civil society- and the level of preparedness of these actors was also examined.



1.2

Election Administration

Election administration remains central in determining the quality of an election and the level of acceptance of the outcome of an election. Election administration plays a critical role and can either guarantee or threaten democratic consolidation. While the periodic conduct of elections does not automatically translate to the presence of democracy, elections as a democratic process remains fundamental in defining the democratic trajectory of a people. The Edo and Ondo governorship elections were the first off-cycle elections after the controversial 2019 Kogi and Bayelsa Elections and the 2019 general elections. These two governorship elections in 2020, were set to present major testing grounds for the reforms and innovation by the electoral commission post the 2019 rounds of elections. Certain indicators were projected as indices of assessing the elections, which majorly bothered the quality of planning invested in the management of the elections. The outbreak of the pandemic revealed new realities and introduced additional indicators for assessment, some of which included the

indicators to track the ability of the INEC to ensure public safety in the conduct of elections while maintaining high standards that guarantees the integrity of the elections.

At the beginning of the year 2020, many held the opinion that the biggest threats to our elections were INEC perennial logistics issues, disputes from the conduct of political party primaries and voter apathy. A pandemic was not part of the discussions on the challenges to the conduct of credible elections in Nigeria. The outbreak of the pandemic resulted in major uncertainty as conducting elections amidst a global pandemic was uncharted waters. Very few countries have had any experience with this. In Nigeria, the lock-down also created uncertainties and left questions on the capacity of the Electoral Commission to proceed with the planning for Elections while ensuring both the safety of its staff and public safety are guaranteed.

In responding to the challenge created by the pandemic, in March 2020, INEC suspended its

regular and non-essential activities such as meetings with stakeholders, monitoring of political party conventions, congresses and conferences. The commission resumed regular activities in the month of May 2020, it consulted widely and deliberated extensively with stakeholders (civil society, political parties and security) on how to proceed with the election amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The commission designed and issued a policy framework to guide its operations and engagements with the stakeholders because of the pandemic. The purpose of the policy, according to INEC, was to enable officials and staff of the commission to understand and respond adequately to the challenges of conducting elections in the context of the pandemic and to provide a guide for engagement with stakeholders. The policy encapsulates health and legal issues, election planning and operation, election day and post-election activities, voter registration, engagement with political parties, election observation, electoral security and deployment of technology.

In the build-up to the elections, the commission released the timetable for the election, issued press releases to provide updates on its operations and intensified engagements with stakeholders to deepen the understanding of the policy. The policy, along with the INEC's manual for the election, guided the conduct of election activities beginning from the pre-election phase. Contained also in the INEC's policy and guidelines for the election was the Voters Code of Conduct (VCC) to regulate the voting process on election day in accordance with the guidelines of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, (NCDC) and Presidential Task Force on COVID-19. In advance of the Election, INEC introduced some technology-driven solutions to reduce physical activities in the pre-election process, deepen the integrity in the election results collation process and still ensure stakeholders engagement amidst the Pandemic.



Yiaga Africa Board and Management Team Pays Advocacy Visit to Johnson Babatunde Kokumo, MNI Commissioner of Police Edo State



1.3

Watching the Vote Deployment in Edo and Ondo States Election

The Edo governorship election was projected to be a fierce contest between the All Progressive Congress (APC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) with both candidates emerging from their party primaries on controversial outcomes. With the outbreak of the dreaded COVID-19 pandemic, the decision by INEC to proceed with the elections as planned was met with scepticism from several quarters. There were concerns about the level of preparedness on the part of the states and the federal government to manage the pandemic. The conditions created by the pandemic also posed a major challenge to the quality of citizens participation in the process. For instance, the increasing rate of unemployment, poverty, insecurity and abuse of human rights seemed to all have been exacerbated by the pandemic and citizens' trust in government and its institutions further declined. This did not make the planning of election in the state easy considering the enormous task on the Electoral Commission to build citizens confidence in elections after the experience of Kogi and Bayelsa states elections in 2020. The apprehensions were on the ability of INEC to conduct credible elections in both states considering the perception that INEC had struggled to conduct credible elections even under conducive conditions.

This was the context within which the elections in both states were to be conducted. With the Political context, security threat, the impact of the pandemic and the need for a credible and transparent process, the stakes were high. INEC and security agencies had another

opportunity to rebuild trust with citizens to aid in strengthening the electoral process. For political parties, it was a test to upholding internal party democracy and ensuring level playing ground during the conduct of their party primaries by abiding by the party's guidelines for conducting primaries amidst a pandemic. For citizens, it was an opportunity to assert autonomy through the ballot. This informed the planning for Yiaga Africa's election observation deployment in both states. Yiaga Africa's WTV deployment in Edo and Ondo states involved a comprehensive and systematic observation of the entire electoral process beginning with the observation of the pre-election environment to the election day deployment. In Edo state, Yiaga Africa deployed the parallel Vote Tabulation methodology to observe the election and introduced new indicators to track in line with the new realities in the process. The Election Day deployment focused on the observation of the voting, counting and collation of results and extended to a post-election interaction with the Election day observers.

The overall goal of the WTV deployment was to deepen electoral integrity through citizens observation of elections and verification of results. Accordingly, the Watching the Vote observation of the Edo elections was driven by four strategic objectives;

- Provide credible, accurate and timely information on the electoral process within the context of Covid-19;

- Promote electoral integrity through objective data-driven analysis in line with global standards of citizens observation of elections
- To ensure that citizens' votes count by deterring fraud and manipulation during the conduct of elections and collation of results.
- To build citizens confidence in the electoral process and system

Yiaga Africa adopted a holistic approach to election observation, by engaging several levels of personnel to observe events across the electoral cycle with the aim of ensuring the rights of citizens to political participation are protected. Observation of elections is important to the transparency and citizens-ownership of the democratic process and is one of the protections of fundamental voting rights.

For the pre-election observation in Edo state, Yiaga Africa trained and deployed 24 Long Term Observers (LTOs) across the 18 LGAs in Edo state they observed and reported events in the Pre-Election period; they were also tasked with recruitment of polling unit stationary observers and tracking of governments' response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the state. While for the Ondo Governorship election, Yiaga Africa recruited, trained and deployed 28 Long Term Observers (LTOs) across the 18 LGAs in the state. They observed, documented and reported election preparatory activities by stakeholders, including political party campaigns and voter education initiatives. The LTOs in both states were responsible for keeping track and reporting the preparatory activities of INEC, NOA, political parties and civil society organizations. The LTOs reported on the execution of the activities in the election calendar and tracked voter education targeting women, youth and persons with disabilities. They also kept track and monitored early warning signs of election violence to deter and mitigate the occurrence of violence.

As part of the pre-election observation, Yiaga Africa observed political parties primaries. For the political party primaries, WTV adopted a mixture of methodologies consisting of desk reviews, in-depth interviews and field observation using a specifically designed checklist across political parties, including PDP and APC. In Edo state, Yiaga Africa directly observed the party primary election of four (4) most popular political parties in the state, including African Action Congress (AAC), All

Progressives Congress (APC), Labour Party (LP) and People's Democratic Party (PDP). While in Ondo state, Yiaga Africa deployed citizens observers to the primaries of four political parties; the All Progressives Congress (APC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Social Democratic Party (SDP), and Zenith Labour Party (ZLP). The political parties conducted their primaries either through the direct method (by the delegate) or indirectly (by all registered members of the party). The pre-election findings of Yiaga Africa were shared with key stakeholders in order to promote successful electoral preparations and respond to emerging threats to peaceful elections.

Also, in the pre-election phase, Yiaga Africa engaged a broad spectrum of stakeholders through advocacy visits and capacity building initiatives and promoted voter education via traditional and digital media tools, particularly leveraging on videos, infographics, social and radio to drive engagements with stakeholders. WTV met with key stakeholders to introduce the WTV Project and PVT methodology as an election observation methodology and as well as inquired on the level of preparedness for the election, understanding of the guidelines adopted for the conduct of elections amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and their plans for stakeholder engagements for the election.

For the Election Day Observation in Edo State, Yiaga Africa deployed the Parallel Vote Tabulation methodology (PVT). The PVT is an Election Day observation methodology that leverages statistics and technology for the observation of the process of voting and counting and tallying of results. Using the PVT, Yiaga Africa deployed 500 stationary observers in pairs to a representative random sample of 250 polling units across the 18 LGAs in Edo State. The polling units' observers remained at the polling units from the opening of the polling unit to the conclusion of the counting of votes and results posted in their assigned polling units. WTV observation on election also included the deployment of 25 mobile observers present in all the 18 LGAs in Edo. For additional oversight, WTV deployed 18 observers to observe the results collation process at the LGA Results Collation Center and 1 Observer to the State Result Collation Center. The supervisors were supported by the WTV working group (WG) members who were deployed to provide leadership and oversight of the deployment.


#WatchingTheVote Deployment for the Edo Governorship Election

 **500**

Polling Unit Observers

 **18**

Results Collation Center
Observers

 **24**

Long Term/Mobile
Observers



CHAPTER TWO:
**THE PRE-ELECTION
ENVIRONMENT**



2.1

Observing the Political Party Primaries and Summary of Findings

The election process remains an important democratic process representing the essence of participatory democracy. For a multi-party democracy like Nigeria, elections remain contentious and with the political trajectory of Nigeria, the contest begins with the competition for the party ticket for the election. The Edo and Ondo governorship party primaries election were conducted amidst party defections, inter-party crisis, mostly among the two political parties with national dominance; the All Progressive Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 87 of the electoral act 2010 (as amended 2015) and INEC's Guidelines for the conduct of political party primaries (2018), and the 2020 INEC's guidelines for conducting election amidst COVID-19, outlines the procedure for nomination of candidates for elections by political parties, this could be either through direct mode (party members nominate candidate directly) or indirect mode (delegates nominate party candidates). The mode of

candidates nomination is at the discretion of the political parties. For election into single offices like 2020 off-cycle elections in Edo and Ondo states, the Electoral Act requires political parties to adopt either direct primaries or indirect primaries to nominate their candidate for the election. 15 out of the 18 political parties had notified INEC of their intention to contest the Edo election, 14 adopted the indirect mode of candidate nomination while the APC opted for a direct mode of electing its gubernatorial candidate.

Based on INEC's timeline for the election, the political parties primaries were conducted from June 2nd to June 27th, 2020. As an organization that promotes electoral integrity, and guided by the relevant documents for the conduct of the primaries, Yiaga Africa developed appropriate tools for the observation of the primaries. Yiaga Africa deployed citizens observers for the exercise and adopted a three-pronged approach for the observation of the primaries, these were; desk reviews (media reports), interviews and

direct-field observation. Yiaga Africa directly observed the primaries of four political parties, these parties were the PDP, 19-20 June 2020, APC, 22 June, Social Democratic Party (SDP) 25 June and African Action Congress (AAC) 25 June 2020 respectively.

Highlights of the WTV's findings indicate that most of the delegates that attended the primaries had a good understanding of the processes and procedures for conducting the primaries and most of the primaries were conducted at the designated venues and at the stipulated times. However, the observation revealed that there were still gaps with transparency in the conduct of the primaries, compliance to timelines for submission of candidates' names to INEC, amongst others.

For the primaries observation, WTV assessed the level of political parties' compliance with the relevant regulations as it pertains to the

conduct of political party primaries in Edo. Existing laws and regulation to this effect include the provisions of the 1999 Constitution and Electoral Act 2010 (as amended), regulation and Guidelines for the Conduct of Political Party Primaries (2018), the INEC Policy on conducting elections amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic 2020, the Edo State COVID -19 gazette issued by the state government. Yiaga Africa's Watching the vote tracked the level of party compliance to the legal framework and procedures for three (3) major purposes. By complying with the legal framework and guidelines, the political parties ensure adequate information to all participating party members, aspirants and their supporters, the media, INEC and observers. It also ensures that all aspirants have equal access and opportunity to contest in a fair process and lastly it ensures due process and coordination during the primaries.



Yiaga Africa Program Officer, Opeyemi Haruna During Training on Election Observation

Findings from the Assessment of the Edo and Ondo Political Party primaries

1. Level of compliance with Procedures and Framework in the Primaries

The legal framework for the primaries serves as regulation and control over political activities, particularly political parties' conduct in order to implement their local, state and national policies on canvassing for members, participating in elections and governance processes. For the primaries observation, WTV assessed the level of political parties' compliance with the relevant regulations as it pertains to the conduct of political party primaries in Edo and Ondo states. Existing laws and regulation to this effect include the provisions of the 1999 Constitution and Electoral Act 2010 (as amended), regulation and Guidelines for the Conduct of Political Party Primaries (2018), the INEC Policy on COVID-19 Pandemic of 21 May 2020, the Edo State COVID -19 gazette issued by the state government. Yiaga Africa's Watching the vote tracks the level of party compliance to the legal framework and procedures for three (3) major purposes. By complying with the legal framework and guidelines, the political parties ensure adequate information to all participating party member, aspirants and their supporters, the media, INEC and observers, it also ensures that all aspirants have equal access and opportunity to contest in a fair process and lastly it ensures due process and coordination during the primaries. WTV findings with respect to compliance include:

a. Compliance with parties guidelines and procedures for the primary election

Internal party mechanisms, for instance, in respect to the screening of aspirants,

accreditation and voting modalities, amongst others vary from one party to another. The party guidelines and procedures set out a regulatory framework for party primaries. In line with compliance procedure requirement, specific indicators tracked includes; the conduct of primaries at the stipulated time and venue, the knowledge of the procedure by the aspirants and delegates (for indirect primaries) or party members eligible to vote (for direct primaries), the requirement for identification for all delegates/party members, presence of a credible delegates list or party register of members at the venue of the primaries and the equal opportunity given to aspirants to address the audience before the voting commences.

Conduct of Primaries at the stipulated time and venue:

The Constitution stipulates the timeline guiding the conduct of an election into the office of the Governor. In section 178(2) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended), "an election to the office of the Governor of a State shall be held on a date not earlier than 150 days and not later than 30 days before the expiration of the term of office of the last holder". By this provision of the Constitution, INEC is mandated by Section 30 of the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended) to "issue the notice of election not later than 90 days before the date of an election". For both the Edo and Ondo governorship elections, INEC issued the notice of election in due time and required for the political party primaries to be conducted between 2-27 June 2020 and 2-25 July 2020 in Edo and Ondo respectively. The timeline required parties to submit their list of candidates by 29 June 2020 in Edo State and 28 July 2020 in Ondo State to ensure compliance with Section 31(1) of the Electoral Act 2010 requiring the submission of a list of candidates not later than 60 days to the day of an election.

The question on compliance with the legal requirement of time for the conduct of political party primaries is mandatory to guarantee the participation of a political party as a candidate in an election. This is because the law expects political parties to document their primary election within the stipulated time as evidence that a primary election was indeed conducted. As reiterated by the Supreme Court in the 2019 Zamfara Case between the All Progressive Congress (APC) & ANOR V Kabir Garba Marafa & ORS, "where a political party fails to conduct primaries,

then is it apparent that the political party cannot participate in the elections." Aside from the AAC party in Edo, the WTV assessment findings reveal that most parties made efforts to adhere to their procedures for primaries by conducting their primaries and submitting the list of candidates at the stipulated time for the Edo and Ondo state governorship elections. The African Action Congress (AAC) failed to submit their list of candidates within the stipulated time and as such were disqualified from participating in the election.

Absence of an Authentic Delegates list or party Register of Members: Across political parties in Edo, there were challenges of the absence of an authentic and unaltered list of delegates at the venue before the commencement of the primaries. While this was not across the board as some political parties in Ondo states had an authentic and unaltered list of delegates at the venue, that was utilised for verification before voting. However, the delegate lists were not posted for public view, specifically at the venue of the PDP primaries, where an indirect primary mode of election was adopted. This raises major questions on the credibility of the voting process because a delegates list or register of members provides a basis for the verification of those eligible to vote in the party primaries.

Identification and Access to Primaries venue: Across all the political parties primaries observed, party members or delegates showed some form of identification to get access to the venue of the primary election and aspirants were allowed to address delegates as some primaries.

b. Compliance with the legal framework (including parties' constitution) for the primary elections

Previous party primaries observation revealed the lack of compliance to the legal framework for primary elections as a major shortfall of party primaries conducted for election in Nigeria. This includes non-compliance to the Electoral Act provisions mandating political parties to conduct primaries to nominate candidates, complying with the timeline for primaries and conducting transparent primaries that guarantee equal participation of all aspirants. Notably, some of these compliance deficits or contravention of the law and guidelines are traceable to highhandedness

by the party leadership, incumbency factors, discrimination, favouritism, lack of awareness of the regulatory standards and bodies, as well as poor internal party democracy. This report, therefore, checks the trend of these contraventions, especially in relation to the provisions of the 1999 Constitution and Electoral Act 2010 (as amended), regulation and Guidelines for the Conduct of Political Party Primaries (2018) and the INEC Policy on COVID-19 Pandemic of 21 May.

Submission of Names of Candidates

Nominated: For Edo State, of the 15 political parties who had notified the Electoral Commission of their intention to nominate a candidate in the election, only 14 parties submitted nominees for the elections, within the stipulated time of 6 pm of June 29, 2020. This was because the AAC had failed to comply with the guideline on submission of names of candidates (Vanguard 1st July 2020) despite conducting a primary which INEC monitored. In addition, all political parties who had indicated interest to contest in the governorship election in both Edo and Ondo state strived to comply with the provisions of INEC regarding the timeline for the conduct of party primaries.

Secrecy of the Ballot: The secrecy of ballot remains a cardinal feature of democratic elections which transcends election day voting to the voting at political party primaries. However, the secrecy of the ballots was violated in most political parties, specifically in the primaries for Labour Party, PDP and some ward venues of APC primaries in Edo state.

Constitutional Requirement on age for Candidates for a Governorship Election:

Unlike previous elections, there was compliance with the age requirement for 35 years for an election into the office of the Governor. This includes both the age of a nominee for the office of the Deputy Governor. This was a cross-cutting finding across the political parties who had conducted their primary election.

2. Party Primaries Environment and Security

"An election is a contest for legitimate power that can be described as a non-violent competition, fought within a political forum. In this context, it is important to recognize that elections do not avoid confrontation, but rather

focus on its management and containment within accepted boundaries” (the ACE project). In practice, the assurance of equitable security during an electoral process is essential to retaining the participant's confidence and commitment to an election. Consequently, this report attempts to assess the primaries venue as related to safety, accessibility and conduciveness. The findings from this assessment reveal that the environment for the primaries for the Edo election was conducive and safe. A respondent who was a PDP delegate stated that :

“the venue was very conducive and social distance was maintained according to the NCDC guideline and the security at the venue was adequate”.

In addition, the security situation and deployment at the primary venue was found to be adequate by party delegates, aspirants and administrators interviewed. A delegate of the PDP assessed the safety of the primary environment through the level of security deployment. The delegate stated that :

“there’s a massive deployment of security and the process went very fine”.

3. Members and Delegates awareness on parties’ guidelines and constitutional provisions for party primaries:

Yiaga Africa Watching the vote in its primaries observation tracks the level of knowledge of the delegates and aspirants on the party guidelines and legal framework for the primary election. Where there is no knowledge of the rights and privileges of members, the lack of knowledge of the procedure, rights and privileges of the aspirants and delegates can be manipulated. Before participating in a process such as party primaries, party aspirants and delegates/members eligible to vote are expected to understand and have a copy of the party guidelines for the primaries process. Yiaga Africa interviewed delegates, party members and administrators of APC, Labour Party, PDP, and NNPP. Delegates, party members and administrators were found to be aware of their party guidelines and

constitutional provisions on party primaries, ahead of the primary election. One of the party administrators stated that

“Yes, I am fully aware of the guideline and as the chairman of the party”

while a delegate stated that

“Yes. I am aware of the constitution and what is contained in it with regards to the party primaries.”

In addition to the above findings, the majority of the party delegates, members and administrators believed that their parties adhered to the provision of the guidelines, party constitution and Electoral Act. For instance, a party administrator from the New Nigeria’s Peoples Party (NNPP) in Edo state stated that

“the party adhered 95% to the guidelines. It was strict.” While an APC member of Edo state stated that “100% of the rules were adhered to strictly in my ward where I voted”.

This was similar to the response by a PDP delegate in Edo state who stated that “the guidelines were followed strictly during the primaries”. Similarly, an APC and PDP member in Ondo stated that;

“Everything was in line with the guidelines, Constitution and Electoral Act” and “Adherence was 100%”, respectively.

WTV observation also revealed that people in charge of the party primaries across the primaries observed appeared to understand the rules and procedures for party primaries, including the delegates and aspirants in the election.

4. Inducement and bribery:

Voter inducement and bribery is not only detrimental to service delivery but also contributes to the commercialization of the

electoral process and micro-economic instability. Exchange of votes for financial and other benefits is not only common among ordinary citizens but amongst party delegates in an indirect party system. Yiaga Africa's findings reveal politicians' and political parties' disregard for democratic principles and the sanctity of citizens' participation. The ballots' secrecy was not guaranteed in all parties, serving as a means for voter inducement. As recorded in some of the interviews, delegates were induced with money on and before the day of the party primaries. For instance, a political party's aspirant was reported to be sharing money at a venue different from the venue of the primaries, on the day of the primary election in Edo state. The same was reported for a political party in Ondo state.

5. The Exorbitant Cost of Nomination:

the primary election in both states still recorded a high cost of nomination especially from the APC and the PDP who have consistently maintained a high cost of nomination subjecting the process to the highest bidder contest. For the APC, in Edo and Ondo States, the cost of expression of interest form was N2,500,000 and the cost of nomination form was N20,000,000 making a total cost of N22,500,000 while for women, PWD aspirants the cost was subsidized to N11,250,000. While for the PDP primary election in both Edo and Ondo states, the cost of the Expression of Interest form was N1,000,000 and the cost of the nomination form was N20,000,000 making it a total of N21,000,000 while for women aspirants the cost was subsidized to N1,000,000.

It is important to note that this is a non-refundable fee which only guarantees participation as an aspirant in the primary election. The high cost of nomination even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic is an indication of the disconnect between the political party leaders and the current realities of the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. Beyond the insensitivity of the political leaders is also the absence of a clear commitment to building a political system that can truly support inclusive electoral democracy in Nigeria. The constant demand for exorbitant fees from aspirants in a primary election has limited the options of voters to only the money bags who have the financial power to contest in the primary election which mostly also mean less/no women. The indirect cost of this system to Nigeria's electoral democracy is three-fold, firstly it enables electoral corruption and fraud

because the primary elections are becoming too expensive for individuals with the requisite capacity and leadership competencies to emerge thereby leaving the system porous to individuals of questionable sources of income to emerge, paying their way through the process and giving voters very poor choices to choose from at the elections. Secondly, it promotes the commercialisation of election and the culture of vote-buying. In a system ridden with poverty, where the dividends of democracy are yet to get to the people, the ability to pay such a high cost of nomination and participate in an election is interpreted as a show of wealth and creates a "beggarly" mentality amongst the voters who see elections as their one opportunity to make some money no matter how little. Hence the growing culture of voters willing to participate only when they can sell their vote to the highest bidder. It has become a vicious cycle that does not end at voting but extends to affect the quality of leadership with more leaders seeing their emergence in an election as an opportunity to recoup the resources they spent from the national treasury/public funds. Thirdly, the more the cost the less inclusive the process. This has gravely impacted women and youth political inclusion. While some parties provide some subsidized cost or no cost for nomination for women and sometimes youth candidates, the reality is that concession for the cost of nomination in the form of subsidy or otherwise is an outward show without depth as political parties like the APC and PDP often stand behind the men who have paid the most with no willingness to support women who benefitted the subsidy or youth and PWD aspirants who got some form of concession.

6. Inclusion and Gender Representation:

Inclusion and gender representation in the political process remains a major challenge in Nigeria. Successive elections have failed to experience and achieve an increase in women political representation. The 2020 political primaries continued in this worrying trend of very poor women political inclusion as the primaries was once again a male-dominated affair. This also includes the process of delegates nomination/selection for indirect primaries. The issues of fair and equitable representation in relation to gender remains a major issue in the political party processes especially considering that the process is skewed against women with only a few women contesting in the primaries and a lesser number of women voting in the primaries.

The 2020 Edo primaries continued in this worrying trend of very poor women political inclusion as the primaries was once again a male-dominated affair. Only one female emerged, as the New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) candidate for the governorship election and two females for deputy governorship position under the Africa Democratic Congress (ADC) and Social Democratic Party (SDP). Accordingly, an analysis of June 30, 2020, INEC's Edo provisional list of governorship candidates revealed that; of the 14 candidates that contested the Governorship position there were 5 candidates between ages 35 and 40; 1 candidate was between ages 41 and 45 years while the other candidates were 50 yrs and above. For the Ondo election, only three females emerged as running mates to the Governorship candidates of the National Rescue Movement (NRM) party, Social Democratic Party (SDP) and Young Progressive Party (YPP). An analysis of July 3, 2020, INEC's Ondo provisional list, shows that 2 candidates are between 35-40 yrs, 2 candidates are between 41-45 yrs while other candidates are 46 yrs and above. Most notably, there is no candidate with a disability on the list in both states.

7. Controversy on the Preference on the Primary System:

There are two ways available to conduct party primaries in Nigeria, that is the direct and indirect method. The direct method involves registered members of the party getting an equal opportunity to vote for the flag bearer as the general populace does in a general election. All registered members of a party are allowed to vote in the primary election to elect the party's representative in the general elections. The indirect method empowers a special group of voters called 'delegates' to make the choice for everybody else. This report attempted to access party members, delegates and administrator's perspective about party primaries. The findings reveal that there seems to be a consensus on which primary is preferred. The majority of the respondents in the study spoke in support of the primaries system adopted by their political parties however this has also become a subject of litigation and one of the causes of intra-party conflicts especially

between party leaders and interested aspirants. For the Ondo primaries for APC, the choice of direct primaries was a subject of

8. Party Primaries

Environment and Security: The findings by WTV revealed that the environment for the primaries for the Edo and Ondo election was conducive and safe. Security situation and deployment at the primary venue was found to be adequate by party delegates, aspirants and administrators interviewed. A delegate of the PDP in Edo state assessed the safety of the primary environment through the level of security deployment. The delegate stated that

“there's a massive deployment of security and the process went very fine”.

9. Adherence to COVID-19

Guidelines: Since the start of the pandemic, elections have been held in some countries such as Burundi and Malawi. However, the elections are conducted within the guidelines for the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. In Nigeria, like other countries, the Electoral Commission developed a Policy on conducting elections amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic. The policy covers voter registration, political parties, election observation and electoral security. The findings from the WTV assessment of the political party primaries in both Edo and Ondo state, in line with compliance to this policy and guidelines revealed that; most political parties did not comply with the major COVID-19 guidelines. Specifically, in the compulsory use of face masks and physical distancing. Though most political party primaries venues provided a hand washing basin, hand sanitiser and the use of face mask before entry into the venue of the primaries, most attendees did not use the face mask, after gaining access to the venue of the primaries. In addition, the social distancing was only observed at the voting area, and not at the entire party primary premises of some parties. This was specifically recorded at the APC and PDP primary premises in Ondo state.



2.2

Observing the Edo and Ondo Pre-Election Environment:

As part of the comprehensive observation of the 2020 Edo and Ondo Governorship elections, Yiaga Africa WTV recruited, trained and deployed Long Term Observers in both Edo and Ondo states. In Edo state, 25 Long Term Observers (LTOs) across the 18 local government areas of Edo State to systematically collect information on the pre-election environment and monitor electoral activities of stakeholders like INEC, political parties, National Orientation Agency (NOA), Civil Society Groups (CSOs), etc. The LTOs were deployed from July 25 until the eve of the election on September 18. Using a standardized pre-election observation checklist, a critical incident form, the LTOs reported their findings every fortnight and WTV was able to produce 4 pre-election observation reports that were widely circulated among stakeholders.

Edo governorship election being the first state-wide election to be conducted amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, WTV LTOs monitored and tracked government response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the state. Another significant component of the observation was the monitoring and tracking of early warning indicators for election violence, in order to identify signs that may indicate a potential for violence and escalating to the relevant authority for early intervention to mitigate and prevent violent conflict.

For the Ondo governorship election, Yiaga Africa WTV deployed 28 Long-Term Observers (LTOs) across 18 LGAs of Ondo state over a period of nine weeks to monitor the activities of major stakeholders in the state. The LTOs systematically collected and sent in reports to Yiaga Africa culminating in a series of four reports on a bi-weekly intervals.

From WTV observations, the pre-election environment revealed violent campaign rhetoric and hate speech, excessive use of force by political parties, especially the APC and the PDP, and unhealthy electoral competition. The Edo Pre-election environment recorded widespread incidents of pre-election violence and personal verbal attacks. In the build-up to the election also, WTV documented and reported instances of stock-piling of arms and light weapons as well as recruitment of political thugs by the major political parties and contestants in the election.

Beyond the electoral campaign, our findings indicated the early commencement of election preparatory activities by INEC in line with the timetable and schedule of activities issued by the Commission. INEC, NOA, and civil society organizations, including religious/faith-based organizations, were visibly involved in voter education and citizens mobilization.

Summary of Findings Across the Four (4) Reporting Periods In Edo State

Edo State

1. INEC's Preparedness for the Election:

INEC successfully implemented all activities outlined in its election timetable and schedule within the limits imposed by COVID-19 protocols. Yiaga Africa noted the high level of preparedness by INEC for the election and its consistency with stakeholder engagement across all the LGAs. Yiaga Africa observed key preparatory activities such as voter education, meeting with stakeholders, distribution of voter register to political parties, monitoring of political party primaries, recruitment and training of polling officials staff, accreditation of party agents and observers, distribution of election observation kits, early distribution of sensitive and non-sensitive materials. LTOs reported voter education activities by INEC in all LGAs. As part of the adherence to the COVID-19 protocols, INEC deepened the use of technology and conducted most of its activities such as meetings and accreditation of observers online.



Recruitment and Training of Election eOfficials



Meetings or Consultations with Stakeholders

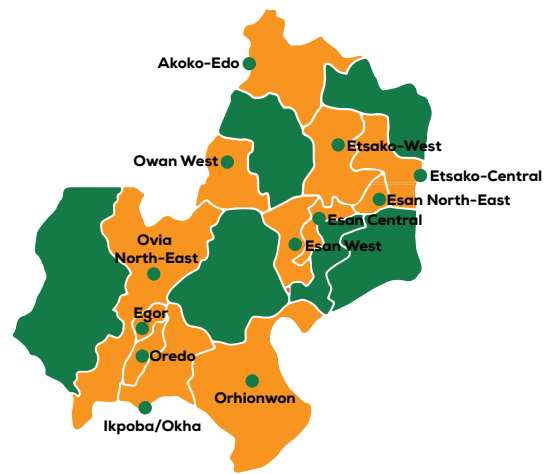


Voter Education Programs

2. Violence-Stricken Pre-Election Context:

All forms of brigandage and violence defined the pre-election context. Yiaga Africa reports showed that the incidents of violence were prevalent in thirteen (13) of the 18 LGAs. The LGAs considered hotspots include; Etsako West, Etsako East, Etsako Central, Owan West, and Akoko-Edo in Edo North Senatorial district. In Edo South Senatorial district, Oredo, Orhionmwon, Egor, Ovia North East, and Ikpoba-Okha LGAs in Edo Central Senatorial district, Esan Central, Esan North East, and Esan West. The spate of violence and insecurity in the pre-election period may

discourage voters from turning up to vote on election day.



3. Stockpiling of Arms and Light Weapons:

Across all the reporting periods, WTV observers reported worrying trends of stockpiling of arms and light weapons by individuals and groups in Edo; these were more prevalent in Igueben, Oredo and Ikpoba/Okha LGAs. Regardless of the weapon's intended destination or use, the availability of arms and light increases the chances that tensions could escalate into outright conflicts.



4. Voter Inducement:

In the run-up to the election, voters' inducement took the center stage at the expense of issue-based politics. Since the PREO commenced in July 2020, voter inducement was a recurring decimal. Political parties, especially the APC and PDP, invested in the distribution of money and gift items as a strategy to swing voters. LTOs reported incidences of voter inducement in Igueben, Oredo, Ikpoba/Okha, Etsako Central, Owan West, Ovia South West, Egor, Ovia North East, Esan West, and Esan South East LGA. These incidents mostly occurred during campaign rallies.

5. Non-compliance with COVID-19 Public Health Protocols:

INEC developed a policy guide on conducting elections amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy articulated general protective measures to prevent the spread of the virus during the electoral period. The policy encouraged political parties to develop appropriate guidelines for the conduct of party primaries and campaigns that take into consideration COVID-19 health preventive measures. During the pre-election period, Yiaga Africa received reports of non-compliance to public health protocols during campaigns as party supporters flouted the public health guidelines by not wearing face masks or maintaining

social distancing.

6. The Underrepresentation of Women:

For the 2020 Edo election, only one of the governorship candidates and three deputy governorship candidates were females. Ironically, 48% of registered voters in Edo were women. Campaign rallies and party mobilization teams also had high percentages of female members and supporters. Yiaga Africa findings also revealed significant participation of women and women groups in the electioneering campaigns and in voter education and mobilization but less of their involvement as delegates or candidates by political parties. Political parties need to demonstrate a commitment to the inclusion of women in elective positions. The issues of fair and equitable representation in relation to gender remains a major issue in the political party processes especially considering that the process is skewed against women with only a few women contesting in the primaries and a lesser number of women voting in the primaries.

i **48%**
of registered voters in
Edo were women.

Ondo State

Yiaga Africa's pre-election observation findings revealed a consistent trend of violence and arms stockpiling across some local government areas in the state. More worrisome was the attack on some female party supporters in Oba-Akoko who were allegedly beaten and stripped naked for wearing politically branded t-shirts and fez caps of one of the candidates. Notable LGAs where violence and arms gathering incidents were observed include Akoko South West, Akure South, Akure North, Akoko South-East, Akoko North-West, Irele, Idanre, Ese-Odo, Okitipupa, Ilaje, and Owo. Yiaga Africa considers these LGAs as potential hotspots for violence in the election. Given the background of pre-election violence and gangster politics, WTV feared that the state may witness a further decline in voter turnout. The low

turnout may further enhance chances for electoral manipulation in the strongholds of the major political parties, particularly in rural areas where election rigging usually takes place.

Yiaga Africa's PREO findings showed increased acts of violence and heightened risks of politically motivated violence triggered by verbal and physical attacks during rallies, vandalism, or the destruction of properties belonging to candidates and their supporters, attacks intimidation of candidates/party supporters and attacks on women. The pre-election environment was signposted by violent campaign rhetoric and hate speech, excessive use of force by political parties, and unhealthy electoral competition. In the preceding week to the election, WTV LTOs

reported intense and widespread campaigns by the APC, PDP and ZLP as well as an increase in reports of voter inducements.

Beyond the electoral campaign, WTV findings indicate the early commencement of election activities by INEC in line with the timetable and schedule of activities issued by the Commission. INEC, NOA, and civil society organizations, including religious/faith-based organizations, were visibly involved in voter education and citizen mobilization.

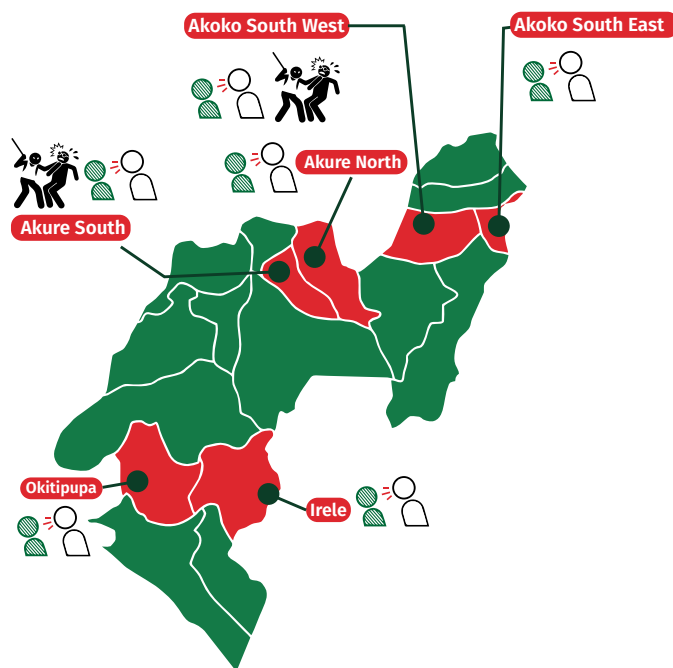
1. INEC's preparedness:

INEC demonstrated commitment and readiness in conducting the 2020 Ondo governorship election. The Commission successfully implemented activities in the election timetable and schedule within limits imposed by COVID-19 protocols. Yiaga Africa notes INEC's consistency with stakeholder engagement across all 18 LGAs. Yiaga Africa observed key preparatory activities such as voter education, distribution of voter register to political parties, recruitment and training of polling officials staff, and distribution of election observation kits. Yiaga Africa received reports on the conduct of voter education activities by INEC in all LGAs. Yiaga Africa noted INEC's quick response to the fire outbreak that gutted its Akure office and destroyed over 5000 card readers. The response averted the negative impact of losing a vital technological tool for voter accreditation and limiting electoral malpractices.

2. Political campaigns signposted by violence:

Yiaga Africa received reports of physical violence during political party rallies, meetings, and campaigns in Akoko South West, Okitipupa, Akure South, Akoko South-East, and Akoko North West LGA; and verbal attacks during political party rallies, meetings and campaigns at Akoko South West, Akoko South West, Akure South, Akure North, Okitipupa Akoko South-East, Akoko North West and Irele LGA. A report of an incident that started on October 3, along Oba Adeshida in Akure South LGA between supporters of the two leading parties highlighted that the incident resulted in the death of two citizens. Yiaga Africa also received a report of another violence that erupted in the Ipele community of Owo LGA, where thugs from the opposing side attacked party supporters for chanting the party songs. Vandalism and destruction of property belonging to a candidate or their supporters

occurred in Akoko South West, Akure South, Akoko South-East, Akoko North West, and Idanre LGA. Yiaga Africa LTOs also heard candidates inciting or encouraging their supporters to commit acts of violence in Akoko South West, Akoko South-East, Akure North, and Ese-Odo.



3. Abuse of Fundamental Rights and Violence Against Women:

The observation report highlighted the threat to the right to freedom of association and expression in the State. Party supporters were attacked for engaging in campaigns, wearing political party apparels. For instance, Yiaga Africa received reports of attacks and intimidation of party supporters, especially in Akoko South-West, Akure South, Owo and Idanre LGA. In Oba Akoko, a branded campaign vehicle was ambushed and set ablaze. Women occupants were allegedly beaten and stripped naked for wearing politically branded t-shirts and fez caps promoting one of the aspirants. Similarly, political thugs attacked a party chairmanship aspirant and party supporters in Idanre LGA. A party supporter wearing a face cap was killed in Idanre by political thugs. Political thugs also attacked and injured a party's supporters in what appears to be a coordinated attack in Owo LGA. Yiaga Africa finds that most of the victims and perpetrators of the attacks and intimidation are supporters of the APC, PDP, and ZLP.

4. Campaigns as avenues for voter inducement, not issued-based engagement:

In clear violation of the Electoral Act, political parties engaged in the distribution of money and gift items in a bid to curry the support of voters. The campaigns were a contest of the highest spender as opposed to debates on policies and manifestoes. In most cases, the parties negotiated with the voters on the amounts to pay on election day for their votes. Voter inducement was prevalent in 12 LGAs, namely Akoko South West, Akoko South-East, Akure North, Akoko North West, Okitipupa, Akure South, Odigbo, Ese-Odo, Irele, Ifedore, Ondo East, and Ilaje LGA.

5. Non-compliance with COVID-19 Public Health Protocols:

Even though INEC developed a policy guide on conducting elections in the COVID-19 pandemic, Yiaga Africa observed non-compliance with public health protocols during campaigns as party supporters flouted the public health guidelines by not wearing face masks or maintaining social distancing. Political parties do not have any concrete plan for ensuring adherence to COVID-19 public health protocols.



Yiaga Africa Program Officer Anthonia Onda, Explaining the PVT Result Verification Process to the Rivers State INEC Resident Electoral Commissioner, Obo Effanga at the WatchingTheVote Data Centre.



CHAPTER THREE:
**ELECTION DAY
OBSERVATION**



3.1

Election Day Deployment and Observation

On Saturday 19, September 2020, Yiaga Africa WTV deployed 543 citizen observers comprising 500 stationary observers, 25 roving observers and 18 LGA results collation observers, across all the 18 LGAs in Edo state. Yiaga Africa deployed the Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) methodology to ensure the integrity of the process and sanctity of votes. 500 stationary observers were deployed in pairs to a representative random sample of 250 polling units spread across Edo state. The stationary observers observed and sent in reports on the conduct of the election that captures the set up of polling, accreditation and voting, counting, announcement and posting of results at the polling unit level. Similarly, Yiaga Africa deployed 18 observers, one (1) in each of the 18 LGA results collation centres, they observed, documented and reported on the results collation process.

Across all the polling units and centres that WTV deployed, we observed appreciable efforts by INEC to respond to the COVID-19 through the provision of sanitization points and water for washing of hands and the

provision although we observed a flagrant disregard for the physical distancing across most polling units. Another sad narrative was the commercialization of votes through voter inducements and disruption of voting by political thugs in some polling units, which compromised the freedom of choice.



Yiaga Africa WatchingTheVote Election Observer



3.2

Highlights of the Mid-day Situational Findings

As the Edo election progressed, Yiaga Africa released its Mid-Day situational report on the conduct of the election. The situational analysis provided information on the commencement of polls, availability of election materials, party agents security officials and critical incidents that may impact the quality of the election. The following issues were recorded by the Yiaga Africa Mid-day situation report as of 2:00 pm election day.

1. Late Commencement of Polls:

Edo state governorship election recorded late commencement of polls due to the late arrival of materials. Finding shows that, as of 7:30 am, just 39% of polling unit had INEC officials and

as of 8:30 am, 4% of polling units had commenced accreditation and voting with Edo South Senatorial district recording only 2% commencement, Edo North 3% and Edo Central 8%. This however increased by 9:30 am, with 67% of polling units commencing accreditation and voting. By 10:30 am, 89% of the polling units had commenced accreditation and voting. A few polling units like PU001 (Obayan Pri. Sch.), Ward 02, Ikpoba/Okha LGA opened at 12:00 pm. In addition, 97% of polling units had security agents present.

2. Deployment of Election Materials:

WTV observers reported, in those polling units where INEC materials arrived, Card readers were observed in 100% of the polling units.

Electronic tablets were observed in 91% of polling units. Voting cubicle and INEC officials stamps were seen in 100% of polling units, PWD posters were observed in 77% of polling units and braille ballots guides in 38% of polling units. Electronic tablets for uploading of polling unit level results were available in 90% of polling units.

3. Availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

Disinfectants/hand sanitisers were observed in 99% of polling units for disinfecting of voters before using the Smart Card Reader (SCR). Handwashing points were installed in 100% of polling units equipped with soap and water for usage by prospective voters.

4. Deployment of Polling Officials:

An average of four polling officials were observed in 95% of polling units. INEC has improved in its deployment of women as polling officials as 63% of polling units had at least two female polling officials. In 33% of

polling units, the presiding officers were women.

5. Party agents Deployment to Polling Units:

Fourteen polling parties registered to participate in the election, while Yiaga Africa tracked the involvement of all parties, four parties were more prominent during the election. APC party agents were seen at 100% of polling units, LP at 42% of polling units, NNPP polling agents were seen at 55% and PDP at 99% of polling units.

6. Security Deployment: Security deployment improved greatly in Edo. Security personnel were in 97% of polling units observed.



Yiaga Africa WatchingTheVote Data Clerks at the Edo State 2020 Goernorship Election Data Center



3.3

Election Day Process Findings

Yiaga Africa WTV employed the PVT methodology and deployed 500 stationary observers in pairs to a representative statistical sample of 250 polling units, and 25 mobile observers located in all 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the state. Yiaga Africa also deployed 19 Collation Centre observers, stationed at 18 LGAs collation centres and state collation centres. WTV received and processed reports from 245 of 250 (99%) of the sampled polling units and 25 WTV roving observers deployed across 18 LGAs as well as the 19 collation centre observers in the state.

Yiaga Africa WTV Finding on the Election Day Process

1. Accreditation and the Use of the Smart Card Reader (SCR): The use of smart card readers for the accreditation of voters in the conduct of elections in Nigeria has proven to have a significant impact on the electoral system. It has drastically reduced multiple voting and voting by proxy which uplifts the integrity of the electoral system. The smart card reader performs two major functions which are authentication of voter cards and verification of voter fingerprints. In the Edo state governorship, WTV finding shows that at 85% of polling units, the smart card reader functioned throughout the day and in 13% of the polling units, the card reader malfunctioned but was fixed. At 98% of polling units, every potential voter's permanent voter card (PVC) was checked by the card reader

and every potential voter's PVC was checked against the register of voters. No one was accredited to vote at any polling unit without PVC. At 96% of polling units, every potential voter's fingerprints were checked by the smart card reader.

2. Compliance with COVID-19 Guidelines: As Nigeria battled with the covid-19 pandemic, Edo state happens to be the first state to conduct a state-wide election amidst the pandemic. Following the National Centre for Disease Control COVID-19 guidelines, the electoral commission set out guidelines related to the conduct of elections amidst COVID-19 of which all polling unit officials must ensure

proper adherence to the guidelines and protocols. In the Edo 2020 governorship election, WTV findings indicate 98% of polling units, voters' fingers were cleaned with disinfectant (methylated spirit) before the card reader was used to check their fingerprints at the commencement of polls and 100% of polling units had a hand sanitation point (hand sanitiser/soap and water). Despite the presence of two queues (an outer created outside the voting area and an inner queue created inside the voting area) in 78% of polling units, there was total disregard for maintaining proper queuing and physical distancing across all the polling units observed. In 13% of polling units, voters not wearing face masks were allowed to be accredited to vote.

3. Upholding the Secrecy of the Ballot: The secrecy of the ballot is a fundamental arm of the right to vote in a democracy. This is however being eroded in successive elections, as the politicians deploy different means to undermine the secrecy of the ballot. Party agents and in some instances compromised election officials employ all sorts of tactics to be able to determine how voters marked their ballots. In 16% of polling units in Edo, it was possible to see how a voter's ballot was marked when it was put in the ballot box. In 20% of polling units, voters crowded polling officials. Yiaga Africa received a series of reports of voters displaying how they marked their ballots in locations such as Orhionmion II, Edogun Pri/Sch Hall; Obodeko Primary School, PU 003 Amaharo, Ward 08 in Igueben LGA; Uelen-Ujugb Uromi Open Space VI PU 013 and Ward 4 in Esan North-East LGA.

4. Posting and Transmission of Election Results: The electoral commission in its guidelines on the election, provides for the

posting of polling unit results at the polling unit using the form EC 60E (popularly known as peoples result). For polling units with voting points, the results are put together on one form EC 60E and are posted at the polling unit. They also made provisions to transmit the official polling unit result using the smart card reader and the use of electronic tablets to snap and transmit the form EC 8A to the INEC central database at the end of the election at the polling unit. For the Edo state governorship election, WTV findings show that in 95% of polling units, the official results were posted for the public to see, and in 68% and 74%, respectively, of polling units, the presiding officers used the smart card reader and the electronic tablet to transmit the results for the polling units. The tablets were used for taking a snapshot of the polling unit results to form EC 8A and uploading them on the INEC's results viewing portal. INEC successfully uploaded 99% (2,618 of 2,627) polling unit level results to its online results viewing portal.

5. Presence of Political Party Agents During Counting of Ballots: Political party agent's serve as watchdogs in every polling unit on Election Day. They represent and protect the interest of their political parties as they are expected to sign the official result form in agreement after the election. In the Edo election, in 96% of polling units, an All Progressive Congress (APC) polling agent signed the official results form (EC.8A), in 98% of polling units, a People's Democratic Party (PDP) polling agent signed the official results form (EC.8A) and in 35% of polling units, Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNPP) polling agent signed the official results form (EC.8A).



Critical Incidents



23

Twenty three (23) critical incident reports were received and verified, among which were;

1. Intimidation and Harassment of Election Voters, Polling Officials and Observers:

Yiaga Africa WTV recorded incidents of intimidation, harassment or violence affecting voters in 8% of polling units. In 11% of polling units, women were particularly affected by incidents of intimidation, harassment or violence (this includes women as voters, polling officials, security, party agents or observers). In addition, Yiaga Africa WTV observers were harassed and their observation materials confiscated by party agents in Edogun Primary School Hall I, Polling Unit in Orhionmwon LGA and Ozolua Grammar School, Polling Unit 009 of Ward 10 in Ikpoba/Okha LGA.

2. Interference by Party Agents: Party agents interfered in the accreditation and voting process in PU 001 at Ugbo Ward in Orhionmwon LGA; Ukpato Ward, Evbuosa Pri/Sch Iguemokhua PU, Orhionmwon II. In Ihogbe Secondary School, Unit 006. Ward 5 of Oredo LGA, a political party agent gave a voter a PVC that does not belong to him to vote, the culprit was apprehended by the security. Yiaga Africa Observers stationed in Aden River Pri/Sch Aden, Polling Unit Code 010, Ward 08 in Ovia South West reported interference by party agents. A Gang of party supporters in large numbers invaded Eweka Primary School, PU 013 in Ward 03 in Egor LGA carrying their party banners.

3. Incidence of Vote Buying: Yiaga Africa observers stationed at Asoro Grammar

School, PU 002 in Ward 1 of Egor LGA, reported that party agents distributed cash to influence voters. Similar incidents were also reported in Omo Nursery/Primary School, PU 005, Ward 1 in Egor LGA, where party agents were seen giving cash to voters. A similar incident was reported in Adams Int. Sch. Evbareke 1 Polling Unit in Egor, voters openly showed how they marked their ballots. Vote buying was reported in Uromi-Open Space VI, 013, Uelen/Okugbe/ Uromi, party agents were seen distributing cash to voters.

4. Violent Disruption of the Accreditation and Voting Process:

Yiaga Africa observers reported sporadic shooting leading to the suspension of voting in Idumwongo Polling Unit 5, Ward 7 in Orhionmwon LGA. The voting process was also disrupted in Obodeko Primary School, PU 003 in Ward 8 of Igueben LGA, where a political party supporter mobilized thugs to the PU to disrupt the process.

5. Ballot Box Snatching: Observers reported incidents of ballot box snatching by party supporters in Ozolua Grammar School, Polling Unit 009 of Ward 10 in Ikpoba/Okha LGA and Obodeko Amahor Pri/Sch Unit 003 of Ward 8 in Igueben LGA. In Adesuwa Primary School, PU 001, Ward 08 in Oredo LGA the ballot box was snatched at 2:30 pm, just before the commencement of counting.



3.4

Verification of the Official Result using the PVT

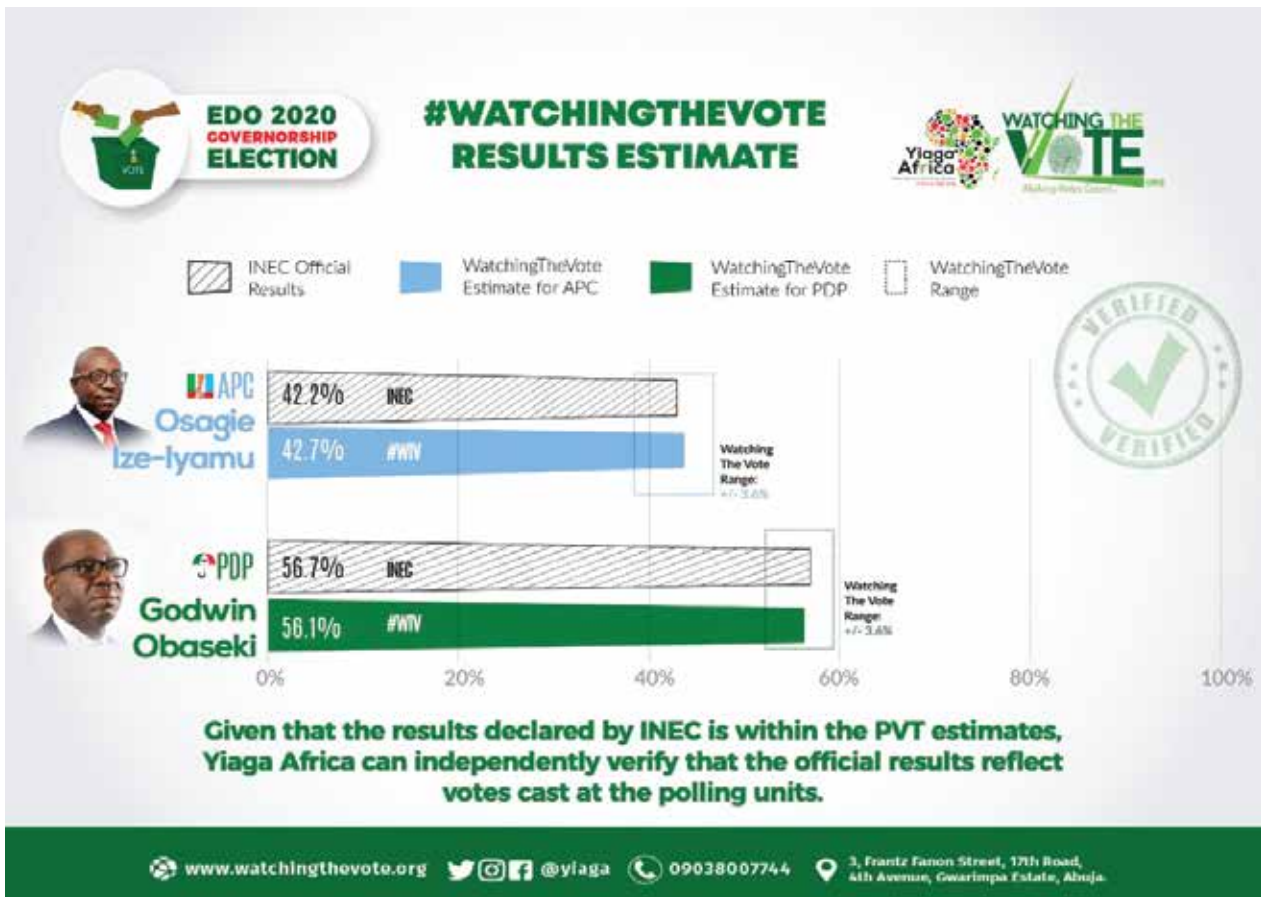
Yiaga Africa WTV Election Day Observation

Yiaga Africa deployed the Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) methodology for Election Day observation at the polling units. The PVT is a proven and advanced observation methodology that uses well-established statistical principles and utilizes sophisticated information technologies. Yiaga Africa WTV provides timely and accurate information on the conduct of accreditation, voting, and counting and independently verifies the official governorship results as announced by the INEC. PVTs are not opinion polls. Yiaga Africa citizen observers do not ask voters for whom they cast their ballot. Instead, the PVT relies on the official results from polling units where observers are deployed to watch the entire process. This tested and proven election observation methodology has been deployed in over 50 countries around the world, including Nigeria - most recently by Yiaga Africa in the November 2019 Kogi and Bayelsa governorship elections.

The PVT sample of polling units was drawn according to well established statistical principles. It is truly representative of all of the polling units because the percentage of sampled polling units for each LGA is similar to the percentage of all polling units for each LGA. For example, Akoko Edo LGA has 5.4% of all the polling units in Edo (143 of 2,627), and 5.6% (14 of 250) of the sampled polling units are in Akoko Edo LGA. While not identical, the percentages for every LGA are very close; clearly demonstrating that the PVT sample is representative of the entire state shows the representativeness of sampled polling units).

Results Verification

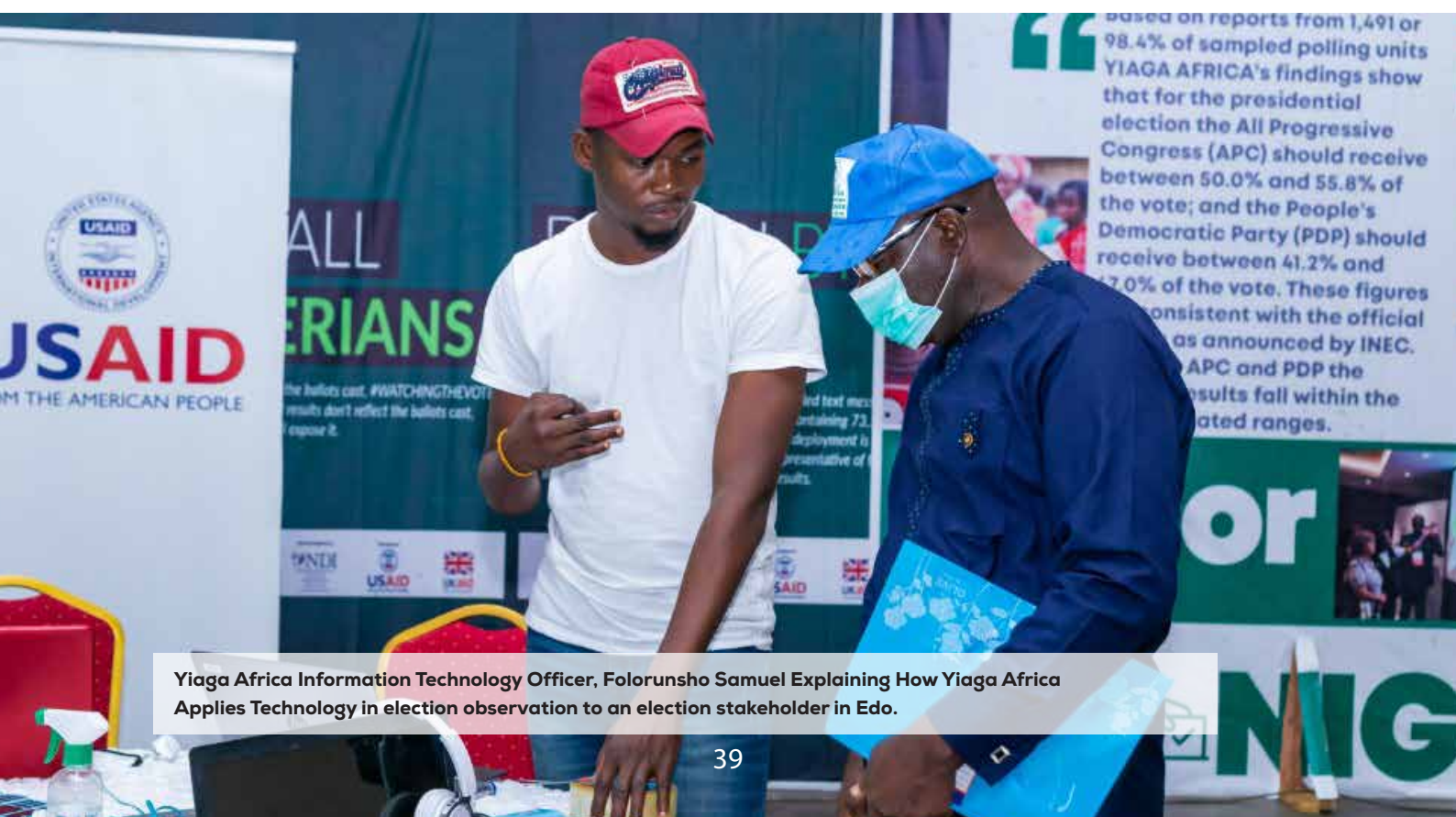
Based on reports from 96% (241 of 250) of sampled polling units, Yiaga Africa's statistical analysis shows that the APC should receive between 39.1% and 46.3% of the vote; the PDP should receive between 52.5% and 59.7% of the vote; while no other party will receive more than 1% of the vote share



The INEC official result for the 2020 Edo State gubernatorial election falls within Yiaga Africa WTV estimate. Had the official results been changed at the ward, LGA or state collation centres, the official results would not have fallen within the Yiaga Africa WTV estimated ranges. Because the official results fall within the estimated ranges, governorship contestants, parties, and voters should have

confidence that INEC’s official results for the 2020 Edo gubernatorial election reflect the ballots cast at polling units.

It is important to highlight that the counting process at polling units was transparent and included representatives from the two political parties that received the most votes.



Yiaga Africa Information Technology Officer, Folorunsho Samuel Explaining How Yiaga Africa Applies Technology in election observation to an election stakeholder in Edo.



CHAPTER FOUR:
**COMMUNICATIONS
AND STAKEHOLDERS
ENGAGEMENT**

Media and Communication Outreach for 2020 Edo Governorship Election

Effective communication remains the key to achieving project objectives. As a citizen's driven initiative, communication remains central in its work of providing information to the people and inspiring confidence in the electoral process. The implementation of a comprehensive communication plan for the Watching the Vote project was key to achieving key objectives of building a movement of citizen's observers committed to promoting electoral integrity. This was achieved through strategic and measurable dissemination of information on the Watching the vote election activities to target election stakeholders across the country and specifically in Edo state.

WTV communication activities provided credible information to inspire citizens' confidence in the electoral process. The Communication strategy deployed for the Edo Governorship election certainly promoted the socialization of the Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) and visualisation of data. In addition, voter-education will be one of the priorities especially considering the outbreak of COVID-19 and its possible effect on the election conducted in the time of the pandemic. Voter education extended to educate citizens on voting during COVID-19. To ensure that communication achieves its objective, activities were phased into various stages of the election process with communication activities broken down into pre-election, Election Day and post-election outreach.

Pre-Election Communication Activities

Pre-election communication activities revolved around engagement with stakeholders and voter education to citizens

via physical interphase and multimedia communication. The pre-election observation reports and surveys provide information to build an early warning system against electoral malfeasance. The pre-election communication tools deployed for the Edo Governorship elections include:

1. Advocacy Visit to INEC and the Nigerian Police: The advocacy visit to the Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) provided an avenue to introduce the WTV project to a critical stakeholder in the election. Similarly, the Parallel Vote Tabulation methodology was introduced to the REC and how credible data was used to counter misinformation. The meeting also created a platform for consistent communication and critical recommendations on election security for credible election in the state.

Similarly, as the leading security agency in the electoral process, engagement with the Nigerian police is fundamental in building early systems and providing early warning signals to prevent electoral violence in the election. Ahead of the Edo Governorship election, the WTV team paid an advocacy visit to the Commissioner of Police in Edo state, Mr Babatunde Johnson Kokumo, (mni) and built a partnership with the Force. This enabled constant dissemination of information on security and other early warning signals to prevent electoral violence. This contributed immensely to peaceful elections in Edo state. There were a couple of other activities geared towards ensuring peaceful polls in the state, like the signing of the Peace Accord which Yiaga Africa's WTV supported.

2. Media Roundtable Discussion with Journalists in Edo: Yiaga Africa's Watching the Vote deploys media roundtable discussions as a tool for engaging media partners reporting on the election. The default engagement of media in the development space has largely been with respect to an invitation to the media to cover and report activities, sending news reports, press releases and press statements to the media partners and connecting reports to other partners. The media is another critical stakeholder in the electoral process with an important role in informing the agenda during elections. This informed the media roundtable with the journalist. The roundtable focused on data-driven reporting of the election and leveraging the

reports from Yiaga Africa observation to ensure media reports provide accurate facts and figures. The Roundtable with media gave an opportunity for the WTV team to share its election observation deployment and solicited support from journalists in sensitizing and enlightening members of the public on the need for a violence-free election in the Edo State governorship election. Similarly, the media partnership ensured the project amplified accurate information to the electorate in a bid to achieve a credible election in the state. The Chairman of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Edo State chapter, Roland Osakue, pledged to collaborate with Yiaga Africa, in curbing election violence and encouraging citizens to protect their votes.

3. Watching The Vote Radio Town Hall: The Watching the Vote Radio town hall is a one-hour weekly program that provides avenues for citizens in Edo state to engage election stakeholders on issues around citizen participation in the electoral process. During the 9-week radio town hall, issues around political inclusion, pre-election observation, citizens' participation, vote-buying and issue-based campaign were dissected as stakeholders address feedback from citizens in Edo. The Watching the Vote hour had representatives from the INEC and the Nigeria Police engage the citizens on their readiness for the election. The program provided information on the WTV PVT Deployment plan for Edo state.

4. Pre-election Observation Report: Yiaga Africa's Watching the Vote pre-election observation report has over time become a very effective communication resource on the pre-election environment with accurate information on activities of INEC, political parties, CSOs, Security Agencies and citizens ahead of the election. In recent times, recommendations from the report enable stakeholders to improve on their voter education strategies and reach. WTV pre-election is also an important resource for violence monitoring, building early warning signals and providing recommendations to the security and general public on how to avert electoral violence.

The Pre-election observation report along with other publications was distributed at the INEC stakeholders meeting to political parties, security, CSOs and the media for general publicity. This was climaxed with the pre-election press conference that raises matters arising, election observation

deployment plan and recommendations for all stakeholders.

Election Day Communication

Election Day communication geared towards achieving one of the key communication objectives of the project; providing timely and accurate information on the election process. On Election day, Yiaga Africa provided evidence-based reporting of the Election Day process using pictures, texts, videos and information graphics. This enables the team to draw stakeholders especially INEC and police attention to any violation of electoral guidelines and provide recommendations. Election Day communication also provides data showing a state-wide story on the conduct of the elections from the commence of polls through the management of the process, compliance to the guideline, activities of election day workers and any incident that will impact the credibility of the process. In addition, as a practice, an official communication on the process is officially shared in a press briefing from midday. The Mid-day situational press briefing serves the purpose of providing information on the commencement of the process, a snapshot analysis on key indicators tracked that can impact the process either positively or negatively. It also serves the purpose of providing critical information that requires immediate attention to INEC and Security agencies and key recommendations to ensure any anomaly observed from the commencement of polls is addressed.

Mid-Day Situational Press briefing: WTV mid-day situational press conference provides accurate information to the public on the arrival time of polling unit officials, the commencement of accreditation and voting across polling units across the state. Similarly, this statement provided information on the availability of all voting materials including electoral materials for People with Disability (PWD), and the presence of security personnel with gender disaggregation of officials at each polling unit. In this statement, Yiaga Africa through its mid-day situational statement provided information on the number of critical incidents recorded from the commencement of polls till midday on election day. For instance in Edo state, the statement further provided recommendations on the need to extend voting hours and the need for security to maintain professionalism and be proactive to prevent electoral violence.

Post-Election Communication

At the end of the Edo Governorship elections, Yiaga Africa's WTV post-election communication provided data on the process of counting ballot papers and the quality of the results collation process. Similarly, the verification statement released after the election gives the public accurate data on voter turnout estimate while also verifying the accuracy of election results released by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). This is followed by critical recommendations to all election stakeholders and the need to expedite the electoral reform process.

Communication Channels and Media Partners

Yiaga Africa leveraged various communication channels to reach out to its audience ranging from print media, online media, social media and also deployed different communication tools. Some of our media partners during the election were online television stations like; Legit TV, Plus TV, Oak TV. Conventional Broadcast media partners like; Channels,

Africa Independent Television (AIT), Television Continental (TVC), Arise TV, Galaxy TV, Nigeria Television Authority (NTA), Silverbird TV, Rhythm FM, FRCN, BBC, Vibes Fm amongst others.

Similarly, major print media platforms played key roles in amplifying credible information released by WTV. Such platforms include, Daily Trust, This Day, The Punch, Vanguard, Leadership, Guardian, The Sun, The Nation, Blueprint, Business Day, Peoples' Daily, amongst others. In total, the WTV recorded over 200 news reports across print and online media during and after the Edo Governorship election.

Online media include Premium Times, The Cable, Sahara Reporters, Legit News, PM news, and International Center for Investigative Journalism (ICIR) amongst others.

Social Media and digital tools include; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, LinkedIn, Email blast. Twitter being a major social media platform for promoting WTV activities reached over 3million users with potential impacts on 82million users.



Director of Programs, Cynthia Mbamalu and Program Manager (Election), Paul James with Presenter, Patience Ibeh during a radio interview at Adaba FM in Akure, Ondo State.



Recommendations

Executive

- 1** The executive should prioritize electoral reforms and constitutional amendment by ensuring a harmonious relationship with the National Assembly to achieve a timely review of the legal framework for elections in Nigeria
- 2** The executive should ensure that the process of reforms of our laws is people-driven and inclusive of minority voices, women, youth and persons with disabilities by placing demands on the National Assembly to incorporate priority citizens agenda for electoral reform.

National Assembly

- 3** The National Assembly should expedite the electoral reforms process by ensuring the passing of the new Electoral Act before the 2021 Anambra governorship election. The observation of the Edo and Ondo elections provides important learnings that require the National Assembly to prioritize key citizens proposal in the new Electoral Act which include:
 - Legalize electronic voting and accreditation, electronic collation and transmission of results as a complementary process to the manual process
 - Provide limitation on cost of nomination for political party primaries
 - Guarantee political inclusion of women and persons with disabilities in the election through the candidate's list and delegate selection process during primaries
 - Provide stringent penalties for electoral offences and establishment of the Electoral Offences Tribunal and Commission
 - Introduce early voting for Nigerians on essential election duty
 - Provide proper regulation of the conduct of security personnel on election duty
 - Provide voting rights for Nigerians in the diaspora
 - Legalize the use of the Code of Conduct and Rules of Engagement to regulate security personnel deployed during the elections.
- 4** In the interest of building trust and inspiring citizens' confidence in the electoral process, the National Assembly should provide realistic timelines for passing the Electoral Act and ensure consistency in providing information on the process to citizens and in engaging citizens.

Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

- 5** INEC should further improve on its processes and deepen the adoption of technology in the electoral processes.
- 6** INEC should commence the process of increasing voter access to polling units through the establishment of additional polling units as required in the Electoral Act. This also includes ensuring accessibility of polling units to marginalized groups, especially persons with disabilities and women.
- 7** INEC should improve on INEC Result Viewing Portal (IREV), by ensuring the availability of election data in machine readable format that is easy to analyse.

- 8** | The secrecy of the ballot continues to be a challenge, violating the fundamental rights of voters to exercise their democratic choice without inhibition. INEC must ensure that voters can cast their ballots with their choice free from scrutiny.
- 9** | INEC should ensure a comprehensive post-election audit of the Edo and Ondo governorship elections. This should include identifying incidents of malpractices and non-compliance with guidelines in the process and reports of dereliction of duty on the part of INEC officials deployed. The findings should be made public.

Political Parties

- 10** | Political parties should institutionalize the conduct of transparent and democratic primaries. This should include a downward review of the total cost for candidate nomination.
- 11** | Political parties and candidates should commit to ensuring the violence-free campaign and promote voter education in the electoral process.
- 12** | Parties are encouraged to deepen their internal party democracy and to make genuine efforts to ensure the emergence and participation of marginalized groups including youth, women and PWD both as leaders within the parties and as candidates during elections.

Security Agencies

- 13** | Security agencies should improve communication on their electoral security mapping and electoral violence mitigation efforts as a means of enhancing citizens confidence in the elections.
- 14** | Security agents on election duty should be vigilant and proactive and ensure prompt response to critical incidents around the voting and results collation areas, especially violent disruption of the process and undue interference by thugs.
- 15** | Security agencies should continue to support their personnel with training and education in advance of the future electoral exercise.
- 16** | Additionally, the security agencies, INEC and the judiciary must make examples of those who deliberately undermine Nigeria's aspirations for inclusive, free, fair, credible, peaceful and transparent elections.

CSOs and Media

- 17** | Citizens should remain resilient as active participants in the process and remain resolute in placing demands on both the National Assembly and the executive for the passage of the new Electoral Act and constitutional reforms for democratic governance.
- 18** | Citizens are encouraged to appreciate the value and power in their votes on election day and refrain from money-driven/motivated participation in the democratic processes at the cost of national development.
- 19** | CSOs and media should continue to explore cost-effective voter education initiatives and invest in early voter education campaigns, especially in underserved communities.
- 20** | CSOs working on elections are encouraged to continue to explore opportunities that promote standardization of election observation and reporting that meets accepted standards on electoral integrity.
- 21** | CSOs and the media should prioritize the demand for electoral reforms that truly captures the priority issues for citizens and leverage each others' platforms to mobilize citizens' voices in the electoral reform process.

Traditional Institution

22 Traditional leaders should charge their people and political actors to conduct themselves and refrain from acts of violence and destruction in the electoral process.

Development Partners

23 Development partners should continue to provide support for civil society organizations to provide oversight of the electoral process.

24 Development partners should continue to provide both technical and budgetary support to the election management body (INEC).



Yiaga Africa Head of Knowledge Management and Learning Department, Safiya Bichi During Training on Election Observation




Yiaga Africa Media Officer, Moshood Isah During Training on Election Observation

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Appendix I

INEC officials results for Edo 2020 Governorship Election

PARTY	NAME OF CANDIDATE	GENDER	VOTES RECEIVED
AA	EDEMAKHIOTA GODWIN OSAIMIAMIA	MALE	107
ADC	MABEL AKOMU OBOH	FEMALE	1,370
ADP	IBOI LUCKY EMMANUEL	MALE	2,374
APC	OSAGIE ANDREW IZE-IYAMU	MALE	223,619
APGA	OSAGIE LUCKY IDEHEN	MALE	177
APM	IGBINEWEWKA OSAMUEDE	MALE	57
APP	AMOS OSALUMESE ARELOEGBE	MALE	78
LP	OSIFO UHUN-EKPENMA ISIAH	MALE	267
NNPP	AGOL EBUN TRACY	FEMALE	258
NRM	STEVIE NASH OZONO	MALE	573
PDP	GODWIN NOGHEGHASE OBASEKI	MALE	307,955 
SDP	FELIX IZEKOR OBAYANGBON	MALE	323
YPP	OSAGIOBARE JONES	MALE	132
ZLP	AKHALAMHE AMIEMENOGHENA	MALE	117

 **2,272,058**
TOTAL NUMBER OF
REGISTERED VOTERS
(AS COLLATED)

 **557,443**
TOTAL NUMBER OF
ACCREDITED VOTERS
(AS COLLATED)

 **537,407**
TOTAL NUMBER
OF VALID VOTES

 **12,835**
TOTAL NUMBER
OF REJECTED VOTES

 **550,242**
TOTAL NUMBER
OF VOTES CAST

Appendix II

Locations where elections were not conducted or elections canceled

LGA	NO of RAs	NO of PUs AFFECTED	NO OF REGD. VOTERS (FOR THE AFFECTED PUs IN THE LGA)
EGOR	1	3	1,971
ESAN SOUTH EAST	3	3	2,894
ESAN WEST	3	3	2,070
ETSAKO CENTRAL	2	12	7,778
ETSAKO WEST	1	2	1,238
IGUEBEN	1	1	1,261
IKPOBA / OKHA	2	4	3,168
OREDO	2	2	640
OVI SOUTH WEST	1	1	992
OWAN WEST	1	3	1,622
UHUNMWODE	5	9	7,709
TOTAL	22	43	31,343

Margin of Lead	84,336
"Total Number of Regd Voters (Election Not Held / Cancelled) - EC 40G(2)"	31,343
Remark	

Appendix III

Yiaga Africa WTV Edo 2020 Governorship Election Pre-Election Statement

Introduction

It gives us great pleasure to welcome you to the Yiaga Africa Watching The Vote (WTV) Pre-Election Press Briefing on the 2020 governorship election in Edo State. This press briefing is one in a series of press conferences hosted by Yiaga Africa WTV during the 2020 Edo Governorship election.

The 2020 Edo Governorship Election will be the first state-wide election to be conducted by INEC amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The election will be regulated by new sets of guidelines and policies developed by the Commission following the Coronavirus outbreak. With the state ranking fifth (as at September 16, 2020) amongst states with the highest number of confirmed cases of COVID-19, INEC and other stakeholders face a huge challenge of safeguarding public health while not compromising on electoral integrity. In line with the new norm of social or physical distancing, INEC introduced online submission of party candidates' list and online accreditation of observers and media organizations. These technologically driven solutions minimized physical contact remarkably. Also, an election result viewing portal was introduced by INEC to facilitate public access to polling unit results to enhance the transparency of election results management.

Clearly, the stakes are high in the September 19 governorship election as typified by the spate of pre-election violence and the level of desperation on the part of political actors to not only delegitimize the process but ensure they secure political power at all cost. According to INEC, fourteen parties are on the ballot having fulfilled all conditions for candidates' nomination. Yiaga Africa noted in its first pre-election observation, that the electoral campaigns had been dominated by two parties – the All Progressive Congress (APC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP). Sadly, the competition was reduced to a

contest between personalities instead of a competition of ideas, issues, and proposals for sustainable growth and development. Two-thirds of LGAs in the state were classified as hotspots and flashpoints of violence by Yiaga Africa due to the frequency of violence, arms proliferation, and a spike in cult groups' activities in those LGAs. The violence rhetoric and strongarm tactics employed by the two major parties for campaigns created a tense atmosphere and a climate of fear. This informed peace talks initiated by the Oba of Benin, His Royal Majesty Oba Ewuare II and the signing of the Peace Accord convened by the National Peace Committee. Yiaga Africa commends the peace building initiatives led by the Oba of Benin, Oba Ewuare II, and the National Peace Committee, headed by the former Head of State, General Abdulsalami Abubakar.

As one of Nigeria's largest non-partisan and independent movements of citizens observers committed to promoting electoral integrity, Yiaga Africa WTV will be providing systematic, accurate, and timely information on the election day process. Specifically, Yiaga Africa will provide accurate information on the quality of the election day process and ascertain if the official results announced by INEC reflects the total votes cast. **If the announced results have been manipulated and do not match the polling units' results, Yiaga Africa will expose it. If the official result announced reflects the polling unit's votes, Yiaga Africa would confirm it**

Yiaga Africa Watching the Vote is **“Driven by Data – For All Nigerians – Beholden to None!”**

Summary of Findings from the Pre-Election Observation

Yiaga Africa commenced its Pre-Election Observation (PREO) from July 2020 with 25 Long-Term Observers (LTOs) deployed across

the 18 LGAs. The LTOs systematically collect information on the pre-election environment and monitor electoral activities of stakeholders like INEC, political parties, National Orientation Agency (NOA), civil society groups, etc. The pre-election environment revealed violent campaign rhetoric and hate speech, excessive use of force by political parties, especially the APC and the PDP, and unhealthy electoral competition. Beyond the electoral campaign, our findings indicate early commencement of election activities by INEC in line with the timetable and schedule of activities issued by the Commission. INEC, NOA, and civil society organizations, including religious/faith-based organizations, were visibly involved in voter education and citizen mobilization. Comprehensive reports of our pre-election observation can be downloaded from our website – www.yiaga.org or www.watchingthevote.org. Here are key trends in the pre-election environment as reported by Yiaga Africa citizens observers;

1. State of INEC's preparedness for the election:

INEC is successfully implementing activities contained in the election timetable and schedule within the limits imposed by COVID-19 protocols. Yiaga Africa notes the high level of preparedness by INEC for the election and its consistency with stakeholder engagement across all the LGAs. Yiaga Africa observed key preparatory activities such as voter education, distribution of voter register to political parties, recruitment and training of polling officials staff, and distribution of election observation kits. This LTOs reported voter education activities by INEC in all LGAs.

2. Violence-stricken Pre-election context:

All forms of brigandage and violence defined the pre-election context. Yiaga Africa report show that the incidents of violence were prevalent in thirteen (13) of the 18 LGAs. The LGAs considered hotspots include; Etsako West, Etsako East, Etsako Central, Owan West, and Akoko-Edo in Edo North Senatorial district. In Edo South Senatorial district, Oredo, Orhionmwon, Egor, Ovia North East, and Ikpoba-Okha LGAs in Edo Central Senatorial district, Esan Central, Esan North East, and Esan West. The spate of violence and insecurity in the pre-election period may discourage voters from turning up to vote on election day.

3. Voter Inducement:

In the run-up to the election, voters' inducement took the center stage at the expense of issue-based politics. Since Yiaga Africa commenced the PREO in July 2020, voter inducement has been a recurring decimal. Political parties, especially the APC and PDP, are investing in the distribution of money and gift items as a strategy to swing voters. Within this reporting period, LTOs reported incidences of voter inducement in Igueben, Oredo, Ikpoba/Okha, Etsako Central, Owan West, Ovia South West, Egor, Ovia North East, Esan West, and Esan South East LGA. These incidences occurred during campaign rallies.

4. Non-compliance with COVID-19 Public Health Protocols:

INEC developed a policy guide on conducting elections in the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy articulated general protective measures to prevent the spread of the virus during the electoral period. The policy encouraged political parties to develop appropriate guidelines for the conduct of party primaries and campaigns that take into consideration COVID-19 health preventive measures. During the pre-election period, Yiaga Africa received reports of non-compliance to public health protocols during campaigns as party supporters flouted the public health guidelines by not wearing face masks or maintaining social distancing.

Emerging Concerns on the Edo 2020 Governorship Election

1. An election defined by strongarm tactics and violence?

In past elections, inflated votes and manufactured results have been declared under the cover of contrived confusion and violent attacks aided by partisan security agents. For this election, Yiaga Africa is concerned with the entrenched subculture of violence built around well-known strongmen, thugs, gangsters, and cultists and the widespread belief that elections cannot be won without strongarm tactics and the support of powerful thugs. These concerns are fuelled by the reports of violent arms stockpiling, recruitment of thugs, vandalism, and a surge in cult groups'

activities in battleground LGAs. Experience from previous elections like the 2019 Kogi and Bayelsa election show that politicians deploy thugs to disrupt elections in battleground LGAs and marked polling units in their opponent strongholds. This is a deliberate strategy aimed at diluting or suppressing votes cast in areas where their opponents enjoy popular support. Politicians also rely on Section 68 of the Electoral Act to circumvent election by compelling INEC officials to declare false results under duress or at gunpoint. The section confers finality on decisions made by Returning Officers and such decisions can only be reviewed by a Tribunal or Court. If immediate actions are not taken by the relevant security agencies to neutralize evident security threats, Yiaga Africa fears that the September 19 election will not be determined by votes cast but strongarm tactics and violence.

2. Consistency in applying guidelines on cancellations of votes and margin of lead:

Given the context for this election and the early warning signs of violence, Yiaga Africa is concerned that Returning, Collation, and Presiding officers if not monitored will misapply election guidelines in relation to cancellation of votes, entering of zero votes, and application of the margin of lead. As noted by Yiaga Africa in previous elections, compromised election officials deliberately misapply election guidelines to suppress votes and manipulate elections.

3. Voter Turnout for the election

Since 2003, turnout in Nigeria's federal and state elections has declined substantially. Voter turnout trends for Edo state indicate low turnout for elections since 2011. Edo recorded 38.4% voter turnout in the 2011 Presidential election; 32% in 2016 governorship election; 28% in the 2019 Presidential election and 32.8% for the state assembly election. With the COVID-19 pandemic and the looming climate of insecurity in the lead up to the September 19 polls, there is overwhelming concern among stakeholders that registered voters in Edo may not be motivated to vote. Findings from a pre-election survey conducted by Yiaga Africa and NOIPolls reveal that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, 71% of registered voters are likely to vote in the elections. However, they expressed concerns about insecurity and violence. Approximately

one-in-ten respondents have directly experienced violence and intimidation related to the elections. The spate of violence and insecurity may discourage voters from turning up to vote on election day

4. Non-compliance with COVID-19 health guidelines

Party campaigns were signposted with poor crowd management and reckless breach of COVID-19 safety protocols (wearing face masks, social and physical distancing, and handwashing). Yiaga Africa is concerned that Edo state may experience a spike in the number of COVID-19 cases in the aftermath of the election if health guidelines are not strictly enforced during the election.

Recommendations

INEC

1. INEC should ensure strict compliance with the electoral laws and guidelines in administering the election amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Polling officials should enforce the use of facemask and gently remove any voter showing the signs of COVID-19 from the polling unit.
2. INEC must show utmost professionalism in election administration and ensure timely, effective, and secure deployment of its staff, materials (sensitive and non-sensitive), and other resources needed for the election to enable early commencement of polls.
3. We urge INEC to ensure transparency and openness in the management of cancellation of votes and determination of the margin of lead in line with extant electoral laws. Uniformity of processes and consistency in applying its guidelines should be maintained across all polling units and LGAs.
4. INEC should ensure proper coordination with security agencies for the effectiveness and safety of personnel and materials deployment. This includes ensuring the safe delivery of personnel and materials after the election.
5. INEC ad hoc staff must ensure that polling units are located in areas accessible to all voters, especially PWDs, to

disproportionately disenfranchise voters or limit their rights to participation.

SECURITY AGENCIES

6. Security agencies must maintain the utmost levels of neutrality and professionalism in enforcing election day security. They must respect the law and citizen's constitutional and civic rights and refrain from excessive force.
7. There should be proper coordination between all the security agencies deployed for the election; proper communication lines and engagement rules should be strictly adhered to. Deployment of personnel and logistics should be all-round and not restricted to certain parts of the state.
8. Early warning signs of election violence should be addressed by relevant security agencies to avoid escalation or spill over on election day. These issues should be addressed in a professional and civil manner.
9. Security agencies should ensure protection for vulnerable voters, especially women and persons with disabilities. Security personnel should enforce appropriate sanctions for any form of violation of the right to vote.

POLITICAL PARTIES

10. Political parties, candidates, and their supporters should show commitment to electoral accountability by respecting the rules governing the conduct of the elections and refrain from employing violence to win the election at all cost. Parties should continue to call on their supporters to shun every form of violence.
11. Political parties, candidates, and supporters should continue to abide by the spirit and letter of the Edo State Peace Accord signed on Tuesday, September 15, 2020.
12. Parties should undertake massive sensitization of their supporters on the elections' guidelines, especially on the margin of lead principle and the constitutional requirement for determining a winner of an election.

13. Political parties, candidates, and their supporters must refrain from vote-buying and the related practice of compromising the ballot's secrecy so that the voters of Edo state are free to vote their preference for governor.

CITIZENS

14. Voters are encouraged to show up at the polling unit and cast their votes in a peaceful manner. Elections are decided by those who come out to vote.
15. Voters should hold the political parties and candidates to account for their commitment to the peace accord. Any party or candidate who defaults in upholding the peace accord is unworthy of public trust.
16. Voters should adhere to COVID-19 public health protocols and INEC's voters' code of conduct for elections during the COVID-19 pandemic. Voters should go to their polling units wearing their facemasks, practice physical distancing and frequent washing of hands, or use hand sanitizers.
17. Voters should reject efforts by political parties to buy their votes. Remember to uphold the secrecy of the ballot and be guided by conscience as they cast their vote.

18. Communities are encouraged not to engage in collusion and should let members of the community vote for whichever candidate they prefer.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOs)

19. CSOs should intensify voter education campaigns to encourage and mobilize eligible voters to participate in the exercise.
20. There is a need for proper coordination and collaboration between observer groups in ensuring that high standards and the global principles of election observation are adhered to.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

21. Yiaga Africa welcomes the action by the UK and US government to impose

sanctions on Nigerians who undermine Nigeria's electoral process and incite violence at elections. These actions are consistent with Yiaga Africa's call on the international community to continually hold political leaders and institutions to account for their commitment to the Nigerian people and the democratic process. Yiaga Africa urges other foreign missions to take similar actions against election riggers and sponsors of violence.

Yiaga Africa WTV Election Day Observation

On election day, Yiaga Africa will deploy its Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) methodology for election day observation at the polling units. Citizens observers will also be deployed to the LGA collation centers to track results collation. The PVT is a proven and advanced observation methodology that employs well-established statistical principles and utilizes sophisticated information technologies. It provides timely and accurate information on the conduct of accreditation, voting, and counting and independently verifies the official governorship results as announced by the INEC. PVTs are not opinion polls. Yiaga Africa citizen observers do not ask voters for whom they cast their ballot. Instead, the PVT relies on the official results from polling units where observers are deployed to watch the entire process. This tested and proven election observation methodology has been deployed in over 50 countries around the world, including Nigeria - most recently by Yiaga Africa in the November 2019 Kogi and Bayelsa governorship elections.

For the September 19 Edo Governorship Election, WTV will deploy 500 stationary observers to a representative statistical sample of 250 polling units and 25 mobile observers located in all 18 LGAs of Edo state. WTV will also deploy 18 collation centre observers to each of the LGA Collation Centers. Yiaga Africa WTV 500 stationary observers, 25 mobile observers, and 18 collation center observers were carefully recruited according to established criteria and carefully trained to ensure that they are non-partisan and independent. All Yiaga Africa citizen observers had to sign a pledge of neutrality and were given a code of conduct to which they have to adhere when observing. The sampled polling units were determined by established statistical principles to ensure the

resulting information is representative of the state and unbiased. The PVT sample of polling units was drawn according to well established statistical principles. It is truly representative of all of the polling units because the percentage of sampled polling units for each LGA is similar to the percentage of all polling units for each LGA. For example, Akoko Edo LGA has 5.4% of all the polling units in Edo (143 of 2,627), and 5.6% (14 of 250) of the sampled polling units are in Akoko Edo LGA. While not identical, the percentages for every LGA are very close, clearly demonstrating that the PVT sample is representative of the entire state (Appendix I) shows the representativeness of sampled polling units).

On Election Day, WTV observers will report to their assigned polling units at 7:00 am and remain there throughout setup, accreditation and voting, counting and the announcement and posting of the official results. Throughout the day, every citizen observer at sampled polling units will send in eleven coded text messages to the WTV Data Centre in Benin, located here at Home Vile Hotel, Benin. Coded text messages sent by WTV citizen observers will provide detailed information on the conduct of the process as well as the official results for the polling unit, as announced by the polling officials. Over the course of Election Day, Yiaga Africa's data center in Edo will receive 4,500 text messages containing approximately 56,000 individual pieces of information about the 2020 Edo governorship election. Once the text messages are received at Yiaga Africa's data center, they will be processed and reviewed to ensure the information is complete, authentic, and accurate.

It is important to remember:

- The PVT is an Election Day observation methodology that provides accurate information on the conduct of voting, accreditation, and counting and independently verifies the accuracy of the results. However, elections are more than just election day. To ensure a comprehensive assessment of the entire election process, Yiaga Africa WTV also deployed a separate set of observers to monitor the pre-election environment. Yiaga Africa's overall assessment of the election is based on both pre-election and election day data.
- Using statistical principles, the PVT only deploys to a representative sample of

polling units rather than all polling units. As such, the PVT results are statistically valid estimates of what happens at all polling units (even the ones to which Yiaga Africa did not deploy citizen observers). However, as in past elections, in order to capture any critical incidents that may affect the election, Yiaga Africa has deployed mobile observers who will visit both sampled and unsampled polling units across the state on election day.

- As with other citizen observation efforts, PVT observers are deployed inside polling units to observe voting, accreditation, and counting. In order to observe what happens outside of polling units, Yiaga Africa has, as in past elections, deployed mobile observers who will assess the environment outside of polling units. PVT can provide information on the secrecy of the ballot at polling stations as a sign of vote-buying, but no observation effort can provide information on whether individuals chose to vote based on monies paid to them or perceived threats outside the polling unit.

Since PVT is based on official results from a representative random sample of polling units, Yiaga Africa will be able to estimate the state-wide results for the governorship election within a narrow range based on well-established statistical principles. If INEC's official results fall within Yiaga Africa's estimated range, then the public, political parties and candidates should have confidence that the official results reflect the ballots cast at polling units; if the announced official results do not reflect the ballot cast, Yiaga Africa will expose it.

On Election Day, Yiaga Africa's WTV Data Centre Edo will open at 6:00 am and will remain open until the counting has finished at all sampled polling units, and all WTV citizen observers have sent in all eight of their observation reports. Yiaga Africa's data center is open to the public and media at all

times. Throughout Election Day, Yiaga Africa will provide - as appropriate - updates on the conduct of the election based on the near real-time reports from its observers. These will be released at the data center and posted on social media at Yiaga Africa's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/yiaga.org) and Yiaga Africa's Twitter page (@YIAGA).

On Saturday, September 19, 2020, at 10 pm, Yiaga Africa will release its estimated projections based on its preliminary data. On Sunday, September 20, 2020, at HomeVille Plus Hotel, Benin, Yiaga Africa, will share its preliminary WTV findings on the conduct of setup, accreditation, voting, and counting. Immediately after INEC announces the official results for the governorship election, Yiaga Africa will hold its own press conference and issue its election results verification statement. Verification of the election results will be based on the INEC official results as announced by poll officials at the WTV sampled polling units.

Conclusion

Yiaga Africa WTV is fully prepared to observe the Edo 2020 governorship election. Yiaga Africa is ready to observe the elections on behalf of the people of Edo and Nigerians to ensure that people's votes are accurately counted.

We call on all Edo people, the parties and candidates, INEC, and the security forces to play their role in ensuring an inclusive, peaceful, credible, and conclusive process. Thank you, and God Bless the people of Edo State.

Dr. Aisha Abdullahi

Chair, Yiaga Africa Watching the Vote – 2020 Edo Election Observation Mission

Samson Itodo

Executive Director Yiaga Africa Watching the Vote

Appendix IV

Yiaga Africa WTV Edo 2020 Governorship Election Mid-day Statement.

Introduction

On Saturday 19, September 2020, Yiaga Africa WTV deployed 500 carefully trained stationary observers and 25 mobile observers in all the 18 local government areas (LGAs) in Edo state to observe the voting process and share reports on the conduct of the election at the polling units' level. As noted in our pre-election statement, this is the first state-wide election to be conducted amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and governed by new guidelines introduced by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). In addition, the Pre-Election observation indicated that the stakes are high as our findings revealed that the election will be defined by strong-arm tactics if concerted efforts are not made to deescalate the tension. Thirteen out of 18 LGAs were classified as hotspots due to the spate of Violence. As predicted by Yiaga Africa in the pre-election, there were more critical incident reports from Oredo, Orhionwon, Igueben, Egor, Ikpoba-Okha and Esan North-East at the commencement of today's poll. Some of the verified incident reports include ballot box snatching, sporadic shootings and interference and disruption of the election process, intimidation and harassment of observers/journalists and vote-buying.

This Mid-day situational Analysis provides information on the commencement of polls, availability of election materials and critical incidents that may impact on the quality of the election. Yiaga Africa WTV is leveraging the parallel vote tabulation (PVT) methodology to observe this election and will be providing accurate and timely information on the election process.

On election day, some police officers prevented observers and media from accessing Yiaga Africa's data centre in Benin

city for about three hours. Upon escalating the incident, the leadership of the Nigerian police responded and resolved the issue. However, police officers were deployed to closely monitor Yiaga Africa's data centre and press conference. Yiaga Africa commends the leadership of the police, in particular, the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Olaleye Oyebade for promptly responding to this issue. Yiaga Africa notes that although this issue has been resolved, we are concerned with the deployment of police officers to closely monitor the Yiaga Africa's press conference. Yiaga Africa would like to thank sister election observer groups and the international community for their solidarity and support.

Preliminary Findings

Yiaga Africa's WTV observation for the Edo governorship election is fully operational. These are preliminary findings as at 2:00 pm election day. At this time, Yiaga Africa has received reports from 236 of 250 sampled polling units across the 18 LGAs. This report highlights the late commencement of accreditation and voting and notes the disregard of the COVID-19 protocol requiring physical distancing and mandatory use of face mask/face covering across polling units. As noted in our pre-election statement, Yiaga Africa is concerned that Edo state may experience a spike in the number of COVID-19 cases in the aftermath of the election given the non-compliance with health guidelines and the absence of health officials or task force to support INEC in enforcing during the election. The following data will be updated as additional reports are received from WTV observers at sampled polling units.

1. As of 7:30 am, Yiaga Africa WTV observers reported that INEC officials had arrived at 38% of polling units.
2. By 8:30 am, 3% of polling units had

commenced accreditation and voting with Edo South Senatorial district recording only 2% commencement, Edo North 3% and Edo Central 8%. This however increased by 9:30 am, with 67% of polling units commencing accreditation and voting. By 10:30 am, 89% of the polling units had commenced accreditation and voting. A few polling units like PU001 (Obayan Pri. Sch.), Ward 02, Ikpoba/Okha LGA opened at 12:00 pm.

3. 81% of polling units had two queues created in adherence to COVID-19 public health protocol.
4. In those polling units where INEC officials and materials arrived, 95% of polling units had four polling officials present, 63% of polling units had at least two female polling officials present.
5. In addition, 97% of polling units had security agents present.
6. Card readers were observed in 100% of the polling units. Electronic tablets were observed in 91% of polling units.
7. Disinfectants/hand sanitizers were observed in 100% of polling units.
8. APC polling or party agents were seen at 100% of polling units, LP at 43% of polling units, NNPP polling agents were seen at 56% and PDP at 99% of polling units.

Critical Incident

Yiaga Africa has received a total of 18 verified incident reports. They include the following;

1. Intimidation and Harassment of Election

Observers: Yiaga Africa WTV observers were harassed and their observation materials were confiscated by party agents in Edogun Primary School Hall I, Polling Unit in Orhionmwon LGA and Ozolua Grammar School, Polling Unit 009 of Ward 10 in Ikpoba/Okha LGA.

2. Violent Disruption of the Accreditation and Voting Process:

Yiaga Africa observers reported sporadic shooting leading to the suspension of voting in Idumwongo Polling Unit 5, Ward 7 in Orhionmwon LGA. The voting process was also disrupted in Obodeko Primary School, PU 003 in Ward 8 of Igueben LGA where a political party supporter mobilized thugs to the PU to disrupt the process.

3. Ballot Box Snatching:

Observers reported incidents of ballot box snatching by party supporters in Ozolua Grammar

School, Polling Unit 009 of Ward 10 in Ikpoba/Okha LGA and Obodeko Amahor Pri/Sch Unit 003 of Ward 8 in Igueben LGA.

4. Compromising the secrecy of the ballot:

Yiaga Africa received series of reports of voters displaying how they marked their ballots thereby compromising the secrecy of the ballot. These cases were recorded in Orhionmion II, Edogun Pri/Sch Hall; Obodeko Primary School, PU 003 Amaharo, Ward 08 in Igueben LGA; Uelen-Ujugb Uromi Open Space VI PU 013 and Ward 4 in Esan North-East LGA.

5. Interference by Party Agents:

Party agents interfered in the accreditation and voting process in PU 001 at Ugbo Wardin Orhionmwon LGA; Ukpato Ward, Evbuosa Pri/Sch Iguemokhua PU, Orhionmwon II. In Ihogbe Secondary School, Unit 006. Ward 5 of Oredo LGA, a political party agent gave a voter a PVC that does not belong to him to vote, the culprit was apprehended by the security.

6. Incidence of Vote Buying:

Yiaga Africa observers stationed at Asoro Grammar School, PU 002 in Ward 1 of Egor LGA, reported that party agents distributed cash to influence voters. Similar incidents were also reported in Omo Nursery/Primary School, PU 005, Ward 1 in Egor LGA, where party agents were seen giving cash to voters. Similar incident was reported in Adams Int. Sch. Evbareke 1 Polling Unit in Egor, voters openly showed how they marked their ballots. Vote buying was reported in Uromi-Open Space VI, 013, Uelen/Okugbe/ Uromi, party agents were seen distributing cash to voters.

Preliminary Recommendations

INEC

Yiaga Africa calls on INEC to:

1. Given the late commencement of polls, INEC should extend the voting time to allow voters who are on the queue to exercise their franchise
2. As the voting process comes to end, ensure that the ballots are counted openly and that all polling units have the Forms EC60E posted at the polling unit for the public
3. Ensure that the polling unit result sheet; form EC8A for each polling is uploaded on

the INEC Result Viewing Portal

4. Ensure strict compliance with the application of the election guidelines in the result collation process

Security Agencies

5. Should caution security officers deployed in the field to refrain from intimidating observers and journalist as the results collation commences
6. Should ensure security personnel remain professional and non-partisan throughout the election,

In conclusion, Yiaga Africa commends the good people of Edo state for their peaceful conduct during the voting process and plead they remain patient and peaceful through the voting and counting process. Yiaga Africa will provide updates as the process comes to an end collation commences. Yiaga Africa restates her commitment to share accurate data and information on the conduct of the

election and results based on its deployment of the Parallel Vote Tabulation methodology.

If INEC’s official results fall within Yiaga Africa’s estimated rate, then the public, political parties and candidates should have confidence that the official results reflect the ballots cast at the polling units; however, if the announced results have been manipulated and do not match the polling units’ results, Yiaga Africa will expose it.

“Driven by Data - For All Nigerians - Beholden to None!”

Dr. Aisha Abdullahi

Chair, Yiaga Africa Watching the Vote - 2020 Edo Election Observation Mission

Samson Itodo

Executive Director Yiaga Africa Watching the Vote



Yiaga Africa Finance Manager, Daniel Mkpume During Training on Election Observation

Appendix V

Yiaga Africa WTV Edo 2020 Process and Results Verification Statement

Introduction

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to Yiaga Africa's Watching The Vote (WTV) Statement on the Process and Results of the 2020 governorship election in Edo. This press briefing provides updated data on the midday situational report on the 2020 Edo governorship report released yesterday by Yiaga Africa WTV. Although Yiaga Africa had received its data on the results by midnight on election day and had a stable estimated range for the election outcome, it could only share the result verification statement after the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) had announced the election results. This is Yiaga Africa's statement on the official results announced by INEC.

On election day, Yiaga Africa WTV employed the PVT methodology and deployed 500 stationary observers in pairs to a representative statistical sample of 250 polling units, and 25 mobile observers located in all 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the state. Yiaga Africa also deployed 19 collation centre observers to each of the 18 LGA Collation Centres and the state collation centre. This deployment strategy enabled Yiaga Africa to provide timely and accurate information on the conduct of accreditation and voting, as well as counting, and to independently verify the official results for the Edo gubernatorial election as announced by INEC. The process report on the conduct of accreditation and voting, and counting is based on reports from 245 of 250 (99%) sampled polling units.

Yiaga Africa commends and congratulates the people of Edo state for maintaining peace through the voting and counting and result collation process across the state. Yiaga Africa observed intimidation and harassment of

observers, voters and polling officials by party thugs, which led to violent disruption of the voting process in some polling units and likely disenfranchisement of voters in the affected locations. Yiaga Africa also condemns the shooting incident in Etsako Central LGA which led to the death of a citizen. In addition, Yiaga Africa observed state-wide disregard of COVID-19 protocols at polling units. Yiaga Africa notes, however, that this election was an improvement on the 2019 Kogi and Bayelsa governorship elections. While the election experienced slow commencement of polls, INEC improved in its processes for the deployment and use of the Smart Card readers, posting of election results at the polling units, and upload of polling unit result sheets on the INEC Result Viewing Portal using Z-pad electronic tablets. Yiaga Africa also notes the opening of almost all polling units across the state, thereby providing almost all Edo citizens the opportunity to vote.

Yiaga Africa undertook Watching The Vote to provide citizens, governorship candidates, political parties, and INEC with independent information on whether the official results truly reflect the ballots cast at polling units. **If INEC's official results fall within Yiaga Africa's estimated range, then the public, political parties, and candidates should have confidence that the official results reflect the ballots cast in the polling units. However, if the announced results have been manipulated and do not match the polling unit results, Yiaga Africa will expose it.**

Election Day Process Findings

Yiaga Africa's Watching The Vote observers witnessed accreditation and voting and counting at polling units in all 18 LGAs. Yiaga Africa provided set-up findings in a press statement on Election Day. These process

findings are based on reports from 245 of 250 (99%) sampled polling units.

Accreditation and Voting

1. At 85% of polling units, the card reader functioned throughout the day and in 13% of the polling units, the card reader malfunctioned but was fixed.
2. At 98% of polling units, every potential voter's permanent voter card (PVC) was checked by the card reader and every potential voter's PVC was checked against the register of voters. No one was accredited to vote at any polling unit without a PVC.
3. At 96% of polling units, every potential voter's fingerprints were checked by the card reader.
4. At 99% of polling units, indelible ink was applied to the cuticle of a finger of every accredited voter.
5. At 98% of polling units, voters' fingers were cleaned with disinfectant (methylated spirit) before the card reader was used to check their fingerprints at the commencement of polls.
6. 96% of polling units were set up so no one could see how the voters marked their ballot papers. Nevertheless, at 16% of polling units it was possible to see how a voter's ballot paper was marked when it was put in the ballot box at some point throughout the day.
7. 100% of polling units had a hand sanitation point (hand sanitizer/soap and water).
8. At 20% of polling units, voters crowded the polling officials.
9. In 8% of polling units, there were incidents of intimidation, harassment or violence affecting voters. In 11% of polling units, women were particularly affected by incidents of intimidation, harassment or violence (this includes women as voters, polling officials, security, party agents or observers).
10. 39% of polling units completed accreditation and voting by the designated time of 2:30 pm, while by 4:30 pm, 94% of polling units had completed accreditation and voting.
10. At 3% of polling units, ballots/ballot boxes were stuffed during accreditation and voting.

Counting

1. At 99% of polling units, polling officials

showed how every ballot paper was marked to everyone present.

2. At 96% of polling units, an All Progressive Congress (APC) polling agent signed the official results form (EC.8A).
3. At 98% of polling units, a People's Democratic Party (PDP) polling agent signed the official results form (EC.8A).
4. At 35% of polling units, Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNPP) polling agent signed the official results form (EC.8A).
5. At 11% of polling units, polling officials recounted the ballot papers.
6. At 95% of polling units, the official results were posted for the public to see.
7. At 68% of polling units, presiding officers used the Smart Card Reader to transmit results from the polling units.
8. At 74% of polling units, presiding officers used the electronic tablet to transmit the Result form EC8A.
9. An average of 2 in 4 polling officials were women and in 33% of polling units, the presiding officers were women.

Results Verification

Based on reports from 96% (241 of 250) of sampled polling units, Yiaga Africa's statistical analysis shows that the APC should receive between 39.1% and 46.3% of the vote; the PDP should receive between 52.5% and 59.7% of the vote; while no other party will receive more than 1% of the vote share.

The INEC official result for the 2020 Edo State gubernatorial election is consistent with the Yiaga Africa WTV estimate. Had the official results been changed at the ward, LGA or state collation centres, the official results would not have fallen within the Yiaga Africa WTV estimated ranges. Because the official results fall within the estimated ranges, governorship contestants, parties, and voters should have confidence that INEC's official results for the 2020 Edo gubernatorial election reflect the ballots cast at polling units. It is important to highlight that the counting process at polling units was transparent and included representatives from the two political parties that received the most votes.

1. At 94% of polling units, counting had concluded by 4:30 pm.
2. Incidents of intimidation, harassment or violence were reported in only 4% of polling units during counting.
3. Further, at 94% of polling units, APC party agents received a copy of the EC.8A

results form and at 97% of polling units, PDP party agents received a copy of the EC.8A results form. At 81% of polling units, party agents from all parties present received a copy of the EC.8A results form.

INEC's official results for turnout and rejected ballots are also consistent with Yiaga Africa WTV estimates. Yiaga Africa is able to estimate that turnout is 27.4% with a margin of error of $\pm 2.1\%$ (between 25.3% and 29.5%) while INEC's official turnout is 25%. Similarly, Yiaga Africa estimates rejected ballots are 1.8% with a margin of error of $\pm 0.6\%$ (between 1.2% and 2.4%) while INEC's official result for rejected ballots is 2.3%. These results are consistent.

Critical Incidents

Yiaga Africa received and confirmed 23 critical incident reports from its WTV observers. The incident reports capture instances of infractions that could undermine the electoral process. These included:

1. Intimidation and Harassment of Election Observers: Yiaga Africa WTV observers were harassed and their observation materials were confiscated by party agents in Edoگون Primary School Hall I, Polling Unit in Orhionmwon LGA and Ozolua Grammar School, Polling Unit 009 of Ward 10 in Ikpoba/Okha LGA.
2. Violent Disruption of the Accreditation and Voting Process: Yiaga Africa observers reported sporadic shooting leading to the suspension of voting in Idumwongo Polling Unit 5, Ward 7 in Orhionmwon LGA. The voting process was also disrupted in Obodeko Primary School, PU 003 in Ward 8 of Igueben LGA, where a political party supporter mobilized thugs to the PU to disrupt the process.
3. Ballot Box Snatching: Observers reported incidents of ballot box snatching by party supporters in Ozolua Grammar School, Polling Unit 009 of Ward 10 in Ikpoba/Okha LGA and Obodeko Amahor Pri/Sch Unit 003 of Ward 8 in Igueben LGA. In Adesuwa Primary School, PU 001, Ward 08 in Oredo LGA the ballot box was snatched at 2:30 pm, just before the commencement of counting.
4. Compromising the secrecy of the ballot: Yiaga Africa received a series of reports of voters displaying how they marked their ballots thereby compromising the secrecy of the ballot. These cases were recorded in Orhionmion II, Edoگون Pri/Sch Hall; Obodeko Primary School, PU 003 Amaharo, Ward 08 in Igueben LGA; Uelen-Ujugb Uromi Open Space VI PU 013 and Ward 4 in Esan North-East LGA.
5. Interference by Party Agents: Party agents interfered in the accreditation and voting process in PU 001 at Ugbo Ward in Orhionmwon LGA; Ukpato Ward, Evbuosa Pri/Sch Iguemokhua PU, Orhionmwon II. In Ihogbe Secondary School, Unit 006. Ward 5 of Oredo LGA, a political party agent gave a voter a PVC that does not belong to him to vote, the culprit was apprehended by the security. Yiaga Africa Observers stationed in Aden River Pri/Sch Aden, Polling Unit Code 010, Ward 08 in Ovia South West reported interference by party agents. A Gang of party supporters in large numbers invaded Eweka Primary School, PU 013 in Ward 03 in Egor LGA carrying their party banners.
6. Incidence of Vote Buying: Yiaga Africa observers stationed at Asoro Grammar School, PU 002 in Ward 1 of Egor LGA, reported that party agents distributed cash to influence voters. Similar incidents were also reported in Omo Nursery/Primary School, PU 005, Ward 1 in Egor LGA, where party agents were seen giving cash to voters. A similar incident was reported in Adams Int. Sch. Evbareke 1 Polling Unit in Egor, voters openly showed how they marked their ballots. Vote buying was reported in Uromi-Open Space VI, 013, Uelen/Okugbe/ Uromi, party agents were seen distributing cash to voters.
7. Vehicles Without Number Plates Seen Around the Vicinity of the Polling Unit: In Ilaba Primary School, polling unit 001 of Ward 008 in Ovia North East, 5 vehicles without plate numbers were seen in the convoy of the Chairman of the Community Youth Council.
8. Not Conducting Election: Election didn't hold in Ajamimogha T Hall I Polling Unit of Ologbo Ward in Ikpoba/Okha LGA.

Conclusion

Yiaga Africa calls on the winning candidate and his supporters to be magnanimous in victory. For those candidates who did not win, we urge them to accept the results because they reflect the votes cast. Yiaga Africa calls upon all candidates, all parties and all Nigerians to show political maturity and to maintain the peace.

Given the significant rate of procedural infractions around counting of spoilt and counterfoil ballot paper, Yiaga Africa recommends better training for election day INEC ad-hoc officials. While these infractions do not undermine the integrity of the process, they are a sign that election day officials' training can be improved.

Yiaga Africa notes that the Edo governorship election is an improvement on Kogi and Bayelsa 2019 governorship elections and recommends INEC take all necessary steps to address challenges seen in the election before the Ondo state governorship election on October 10 2020. Yiaga Africa encourages INEC to address logistical challenges observed relating to late commencement of polls for the upcoming gubernatorial election in Ondo State. In addition, INEC should ensure it enforces adherence to the COVID-19 health protocols in the Ondo election. The National Assembly should accelerate reforms to the electoral act to legalize electronic transmission of results as the INEC results viewing portal deployed for the election has demonstrated how citizens' access to polling unit results increases the integrity of the electoral process and encourages acceptability of electoral outcomes.

Yiaga Africa commends and appreciates the

Oba of Benin, His Royal Majesty Oba Ewuare II and the National Peace Committee (NPC) for responding to the call by stakeholders on the threat of violence as indicated in Yiaga Africa's Pre-election observation report. The interventions contributed in no small measure to the peaceful conduct of the election.

Notwithstanding the incident with some police officers restricting access to the WTV data centre for three hours on Election Day which was later resolved, Yiaga Africa commends the professionalism of the security agents who worked to keep the peace on Election Day. Yiaga Africa also calls on the security agencies to remain non-partisan and professional towards the Ondo governorship election.






Yiaga Africa would like to thank the many Nigerians across the state who volunteered to serve as non-partisan WTV citizen observers on behalf of all the people of Edo. Yiaga Africa commends the dedication of the permanent INEC staff in Abuja and Edo state who organized the election and the commitment of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members who served as poll officials. Yiaga Africa would like to thank sister election observer groups and the international community for their solidarity and support. Yiaga Africa, through the Watching The Vote initiative, is committed to promoting more credible elections by providing independent information on the conduct of elections and independently verifying the accuracy of election results. **#WatchingTheVote is For All Nigerians, Beholden to No One, and Driven By Data.**

Long live Edo state, long live Nigeria. Thank you.


Appendix VI

Gender Distribution of WTV Personnel in Edo and Ondo

Edo State

Personnel	Male	Female	Total	%Female
 WTV Trainers	21	19	40	48%
 SFP	1	0	1	0%
 LGA Supervisors	12	12	24	50%
 LGA Collation Observers	9	9	18	50%
 Polling Unit Observer	290	210	500	42%

Ondo State

Personnel	Male	Female	Total	%Female
 WTV Trainers	23	18	41	44%
 SFP	1	0	1	0%
 LGA Supervisors	14	13	27	48%
 LGA Collation Observers	13	5	18	28%
 Polling Unit Observer	360	240	600	40%

Appendix VII

Special Appreciation to WTV Trainers

We appreciate the tremendous efforts of our Master Trainers who have been very consistent with imparting knowledge, especially in the training of WTV's citizen observers in the areas of election observation and civic engagements;

Specially recognition to the cohorts of trainers that supported the election observation deployment in Edo:

WTV Master Trainers

1. Abidogun Peter Oludotun	21. Luke Adanu Ekwote
2. Abraham E. Solomon	22. Mangut, Aisha Gambo
3. Balami Shama	23. Obaike Kathryn Une
4. Adegbesan Tosin	24. Olisa Sochi Stanley
5. Aitiya Musa	25. Oloruntele Seyi Felicia
6. Akinola Dabiri	26. Omimakinde Seyi Emmanuel
7. Chalya Dashe	27. Omotola Balogun R.
8. Edache Ehi	28. Omolola Mamedu
9. Edache Lucy	29. Onda Stephen Ida
10. Emmanuel Augustina Ashezi	30. Oyebiyi Babajide
11. Enwongo Bassej George	31. Rakiya Aminu
12. Enyo Illah	32. Samuel Tobi Alawode
13. Ezekiel Onu	33. Sani Yasir Muhammad
14. Funso-Ibikunle Olufunmilola Janet	34. Somtochukwu Tochi Onyeme nam
15. Gausa Roseline Haule	35. Theodora Lucas Dawal
16. Gbegbaje Loretta Oghenekevwe	36. Torkuma Asogo Venantius
17. Idris Mohammed	37. Tumininu Adeeko
18. Isaiaha A Amony	38. Ukata Amarachi Maryann
19. Izu Stephen Iroro	39. Violet Ibeh
20. Johnson Ejiasa	40. Zainab Tanko

Appendix VIII

Watching The Vote Edo State Local Government Areas Supervisors And State Focal Persons

Role	LGA	Name	Gender
LGA Supervisor	Akoko Edo	Ernest Akpaja	F
LGA Supervisor	Egor	Omoregie Clara Edoghogho	F
LGA Supervisor	Egor	Imarhiagbe Erhunmwense Amadi	M
LGA Supervisor	Esan Central	Kadiri Iyangbe Samson	F
LGA Supervisor	Esan North East	Oyedo Joanna	F
LGA Supervisor	Esan South East	Clement Isuro	M
LGA Supervisor	Esan West	Onobhamioriobe Omony	F
LGA Supervisor	Etsako Central	Audu Abdulrasheed Danjumah	M
LGA Supervisor	Etsako East	Chief Onyenye John	M
LGA Supervisor	Etsako West	Oshiobugie Rilwanu Bonvist	M
LGA Supervisor	Igueben	Enabulele Itoya Endurance	M
LGA Supervisor	Ikpoba/Okha	Enabulele Osato Joy	F
LGA Supervisor	Ikpoba/Okha	Eyeniyani Josephine	F
LGA Supervisor	Ikpoba/Okha	Ozakpolor Justice	M
LGA Supervisor	Oredo	Ewaram Ama Deborah	F
LGA Supervisor	Oredo	Amos Osarodion Ediagbonya	M
LGA Supervisor	Oredo	Onuoha Ignatius Obinna	M

Watching The Vote Edo State Local Government Areas Supervisors And State Focal Persons

Role	LGA	Name	Gender
LGA Supervisor	Orhionmwon	Chibua Blessing Elijah	F
LGA Supervisor	Orhionmwon	Murphy Osas Aigbekaen	M
LGA Supervisor	Ovia North East	Ekhaton Osadebamwen	F
LGA Supervisor	Ovia South West	Kwemezi Osazuwa Godwin	F
LGA Supervisor	Owan East	Aigbevboile Aibuse Betty	F
LGA Supervisor	Owan West	Jacob Edekin Isaiah	M
LGA Supervisor	Uhunmwode	Eraga Israel Oserhiemen	M
State Focal Point	Oredo	Prince Isreal Oreka	M

Appendix IX

Watching The Vote Ondo State Local Government Areas Supervisors And State Focal Persons

Role	LGA	Name	Gender
LGA Supervisor	Akoko North East	Umar Abdulrahman Adedayo	M
LGA Supervisor	Akoko North West	Daramola Kayode Rapheal	M
LGA Supervisor	Akoko North West	Adebayo Mercy Ronke	F
LGA Supervisor	Akoko South East	Anjorin Solomon Oluniyi	M
LGA Supervisor	Akoko South West	Fasoyin Stephen Adebola	M
LGA Supervisor	Akoko South West	Aminu Ramata Shola	F
LGA Supervisor	Akure North	Bamigboye A. Folashade	F
LGA Supervisor	Akure South	Buraimoh Adesola Rebecca	F
LGA Supervisor	Akure South	Olagoke Adejoke Grace	F
LGA Supervisor	Ese-Odo	Iyosan Bamidele	M
LGA Supervisor	Idanre	Akinrimisi John Jimoh	M
LGA Supervisor	Ifedore	Falayi Toyosi Deborah	F
LGA Supervisor	Ilaje	Omoniyi Ola Jeffrey	M
LGA Supervisor	Ilaje	Omomoluwa Faith O	F
LGA Supervisor	Ileoluji/Okeigbo	Olajide Toyin Folashade	F
LGA Supervisor	Ileoluji/Okeigbo	Awonusi Aanuoluwapo	F
LGA Supervisor	Irele	Fakomogbon Oluwafemi	M

Watching The Vote Ondo State Local Government Areas Supervisors And State Focal Persons

Role	LGA	Name	Gender
LGA Supervisor	Odigbo	Akinrelere Sunday	M
LGA Supervisor	Odigbo	David Grace Atinuke	F
LGA Supervisor	Okitipupa	Ekundayo Folashade Davies	M
LGA Supervisor	Okitipupa	Owofola Joy	F
LGA Supervisor	Ondo East	Akinlawo Omotayo Oluwaseun	M
LGA Supervisor	Ondo West	Oladejo Isaac Olatunde	M
LGA Supervisor	Ondo West	Adeogun Halimat Oluwaseyi	F
LGA Supervisor	Ose	Alegbe Olabode	M
LGA Supervisor	Owo	Ogunmola Muhammed Dayo	M
LGA Supervisor	Owo	Eyinla Khadijat Queen	F
State Focal Point	Akure South	Egbedele Olusegun	M

ABOUT

Yiaga Africa Watching The Vote

Yiaga Africa Watching The Vote is a citizen-led election observation initiative aimed at enhancing the integrity of elections in Nigeria using technological tools like SMS and evidence-based research methodologies to further election observation. The initiative is designed to promote credible elections and boost citizens' confidence in the electoral process through citizen's observation of electoral activities in the electoral cycle.

Yiaga Africa is enhancing the quality of democracy in Nigeria using the WTV as a platform for promoting cutting-edge electoral policies, credible elections, civic participation and democratic consolidation.



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