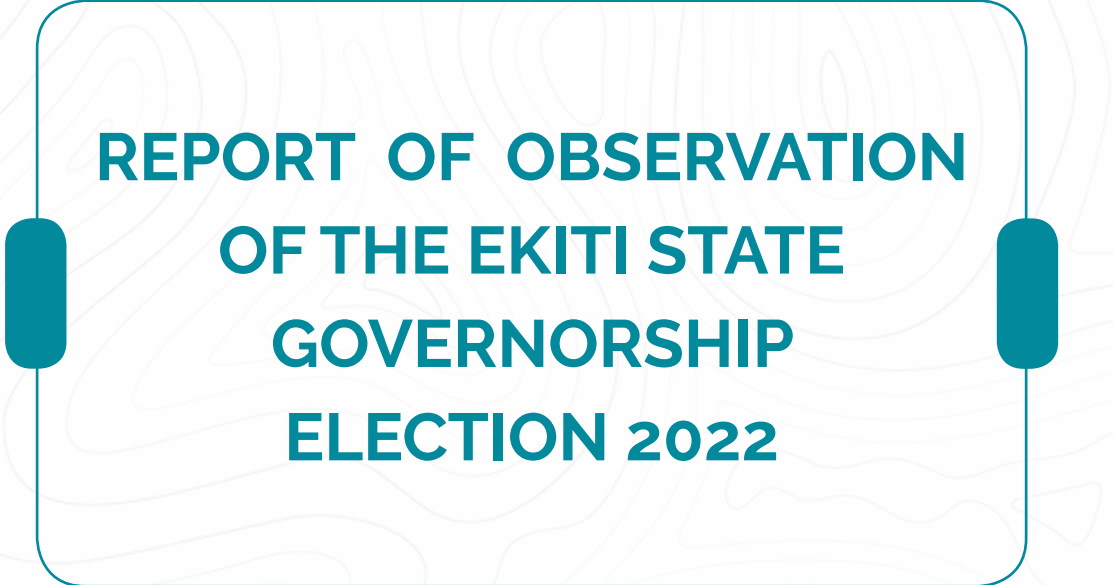


**REPORT OF
OBSERVATION OF THE
EKITI STATE GOVERNORSHIP
ELECTION 2022**





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OF THE EKITI STATE
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Published by

NIGERIA CIVIL SOCIETY
SITUATIONROOM

Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room

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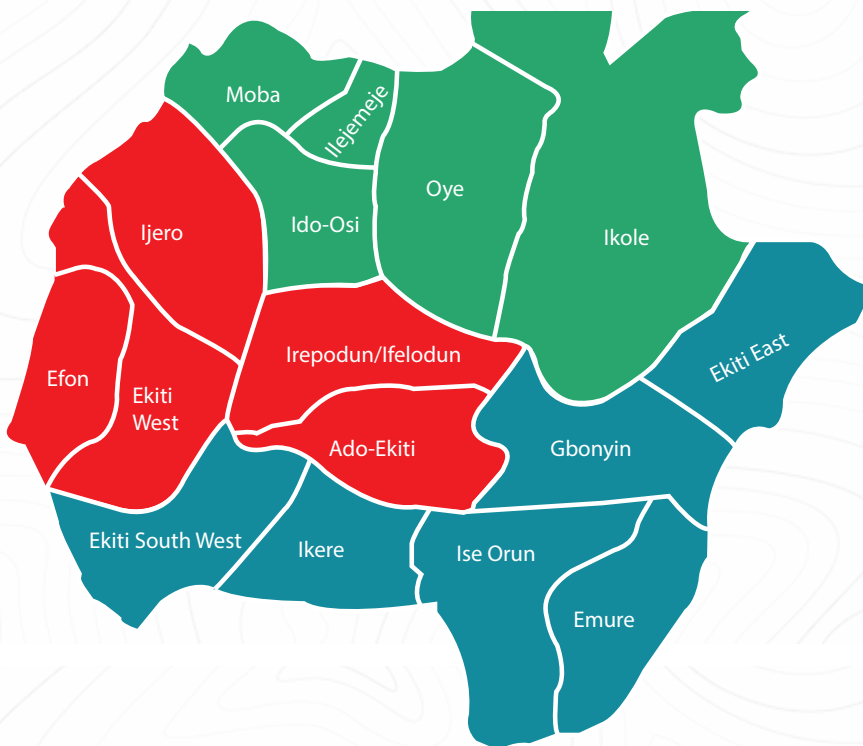
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INTRODUCTION

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) conducted the Ekiti State Governorship Election on Saturday, 18th June 2022 across the 16 Local Government Area of the State. INEC also conducted alongside the governorship election, the Ekiti East 1 State Constituency Bye-election, suspended midway on election day in 2021 due to incidents of election violence in several polling units, culminating in death of some citizens.

The governorship election and the bye-election held peacefully much to the relief of stakeholders, with voters playing a key part in the peaceful election environment. Ekiti State has a history of election violence, made even prominent since the 2009 supplementary election in the State where several voters were attacked and an INEC LGA office in Ido-Osi was burnt down by political thugs. In 2021, there were reports of several incidents of political violence and killings leading to suspension of the Ekiti East 1 State Constituency Bye-election.



ELECTORAL STATISTICS

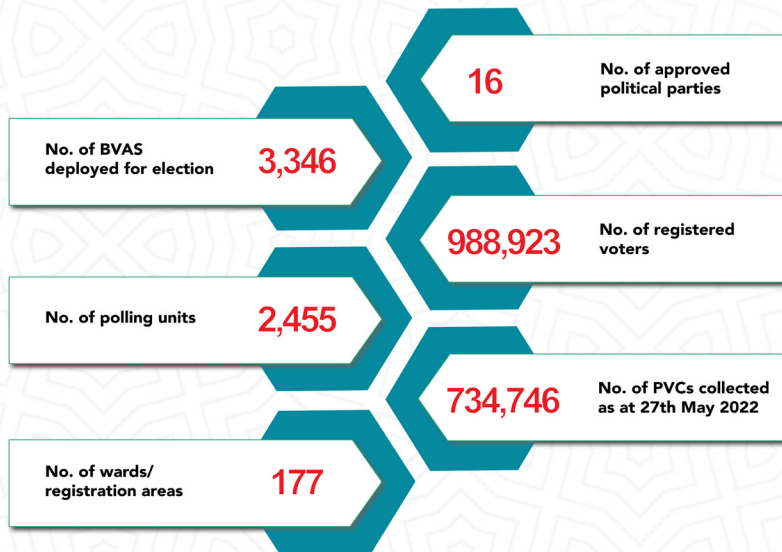
Sixteen political parties, out of eighteen registered political parties in Nigeria, fielded candidates for the governorship election held on Saturday, 18th June 2022. For the bye-election that held on the same date in Ekiti East 1 State Constituency, five political parties fielded a candidate each.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR CANDIDATES

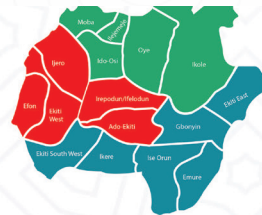
Party	Position	Name	Age	Gender
ACCORD PARTY	GOVERNOR	REUBEN BOYE FAMUYIBO	63	Male
	DEPUTY	OLUMIDE EZEKIEL FALANA	67	Male
LABOUR PARTY	GOVERNOR	DARAMOLA ROWLAND OLUGBENGA	61	Male
	DEPUTY	ONILE IBRAHIM YUSUF	54	Male
AFRICAN ACTION CONGRESS	GOVERNOR	AJAGUNIBALA MOSES OLAJIDE	57	Male
	DEPUTY	OLUDELE OLUWABUNMI	44	Male
NEW NIGERIA PEOPLES PARTY	GOVERNOR	FATOMILOLA OLADOSU ABIODUN	47	Male
	DEPUTY	ADE-AJAYI OLUWATOYIN HANNAH	52	Female
AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS	GOVERNOR	OLUWOLE OLU MAYOKUN OLUYEDE	57	Male
	DEPUTY	POPOOLA HIDIAT SIMBO	47	Male
NATIONAL RESCUE MOVEMENT	GOVERNOR	IYANIWURA TOPE IFEDAYO	36	Male
	DEPUTY	AROWOLO KAYODE WILLIAMS	45	Male
AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY	GOVERNOR	ELEBUTE-HALLE JOSEPHINE KEMI	40	Female
	DEPUTY	AFUYE IDOWU SUNDAY	41	Male
PEOPLES DEMOCRATIC PARTY	GOVERNOR	OLABISI KOLAWOLE	64	Male
	DEPUTY	KOLAPO OLUGBENGA KOLADE	55	Male
ALL PROGRESSIVES CONGRESS	GOVERNOR	ABIODUN ABAYOMI OYEBANJI	54	Male
	DEPUTY	AFUYE MONISADE	63	Male
PEOPLES REDEMPTION PARTY	GOVERNOR	AGBOOLA OLANIYI BEN	52	Male
	DEPUTY	OGIDAN TOLULOPE OLUWATOYIN	46	Male
ALL PROGRESSIVES GRAND ALLIANCE	GOVERNOR	BENJAMIN OLUFEMI OBIDIYON	46	Male
	DEPUTY	OLUWAFEMI ANTHONY FAEJI	61	Male
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY	GOVERNOR	OLUSEGUN ADEBAYO ONI	67	Male
	DEPUTY	JAMES OLADIPO OWOLABI	68	Male
ALLIED PEOPLES MOVEMENT	GOVERNOR	FAGBEMI PETER ADEGBENRO	59	Male
	DEPUTY	AKINYEYE OLUWATOSIN EUNICE	46	Female
YOUNG PROGRESSIVE PARTY	GOVERNOR	ADEBOWALE OLARUNTI AJAYI	62	Male
	DEPUTY	OLASENI NURENI BABATUNDE	48	Male
ACTION PEOPLES PARTY	GOVERNOR	CHRISTIANA MODUPE OLATAWURA	62	Female
	DEPUTY	IBUKUN SOLOMON OWOLABI	38	Male
ZENITH LABOUR PARTY	GOVERNOR	ADEOLU KOLADE AKINYEMI	43	Male
	DEPUTY	DAMILOLA AKINTOYE	36	Male

Breakdown of the list of candidates released by INEC shows that 2 female candidates and 14 male candidates contested the Governorship election while there were 7 female and 9 male deputy governorship candidates in the election.

OVERVIEW OF EKITI GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION



EKITI STATE LGAs, No. of Wards and Registered Voters



S/N	LGA	Total No of Wards/ Registered Voters	No. of Registered Voters
1	Ado-Ekiti	13	179,071
2	Efon	10	30,076
3	Ekiti East	12	61,357
4	Ekiti South West	11	59,220
5	Ekiti West	11	53,712
6	Emure	10	37,122
7	Gbonyin	10	53,785
8	Ido-Osi	11	57,766
9	Ijero	12	64,524
10	Ikere	11	65,651
11	Ikole	12	719,71
12	Ilejemeje	10	18,790
13	Irepodun/ Ifelodun	11	70,467
14	Ise/Orun	10	46,696
15	Moba	11	53,293
16	Oye	12	65,422
	TOTAL	177	988, 923

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SITUATION ROOM PRE-ELECTION ACTIVITIES

Situation Room Strategy Meeting

Situation Room held a Strategy Meeting on Monday, 28th March 2022 with CSOs from Ekiti State to deliberate on the Strategy to engage the process that will ensure a peaceful, credible and inclusive election. Participants at the meeting deliberated on the need to gain more knowledge of the new Electoral Act, engage in rigorous voter education, work in synergy to engage election stakeholders particularly INEC and political parties, track and fact-check fake news, conduct sensitization to improve voters' turnout on election day and minimize vote-trading. The deliberations culminated in the development of a Work-Plan for State-based CSOs, groups and Situation Room members to engage the process.

Situation Room Training of Election Observers

Situation Room held a training session on Saturday, 14th May 2022 in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti for its domestic observers and accredited observers from partner organisations. The training session covered overview of election observation, code of conduct for election observers, update on political environment, flashpoints mapping, deployment, and reporting template, amongst others.

Situation Room Dialogue Session with INEC REC of Ekiti

On Saturday, 14th June 2022, Situation Room held a Dialogue Session with the Ekiti State Independent National Electoral Commission Resident Electoral Commissioner (INEC REC), Dr. Tella Adeniran Rahmon, to discuss INEC's preparedness for the governorship election and to address issues that may arise during the election day observation. The INEC REC of Ekiti State, Dr. Rahmon, assured Situation Room and its partners of INEC's preparation for the election and affirmed that it had taken all necessary steps towards conducting a credible election.

AIT's Townhall Debate

Situation Room supported African Independent Television (AIT)/Raypower network to conduct a Townhall Debate in Ekiti. The Townhall held on Thursday, 9th June 2022 at Afe Babalola Civic Centre, Ado-Ekiti with Traditional leaders and citizens interacting with governorship candidates ahead of the election.

Governorship Debate with Channels Television

On Sunday, 12th June 2022, Channels Television held a Governorship Debate with six governorship candidates ahead of the Governorship election. The Debate was wholly supported by the Situation Room, and provided an opportunity for candidates to share their development plans and agenda with the people of Ekiti State to enable prospective voters make their choice of candidate.

POLL OFFICIALS



Number of Presiding Officers and Assistants

10,269



Number of Supervisory Presiding Officers (SPOs)

245



State Returning Officer

1



Registration Area Collation Officers (RACOs)

177



LGA Collation Officers (LGCOs)

16



ELECTION-DAY OBSERVATION

Structure and Observation Methodology

Situation Room's Election Day set-up is generally divided into two: a Technical Team and an Analysts' Team. The Technical Team is further divided into a Call Centre, a Social Media Desk and an Escalation Desk. The Call Centre communicates with accredited field observers deployed by Situation Room to receive reports on the conduct of the election, and also receive reports from citizen observers using Situation Room's telephone lines and social media platforms and verify the reports. These reports are documented and then published on Situation Room's social media platforms, to provide real-time updates on the election. Incidents' reports are verified and escalated to relevant agencies particularly INEC and the Police for intervention, depend on the nature of the incidents. The escalation process also involves follow up, to confirm if the reported issues are resolved.

All the reports received are discussed by the Team of Analysts to assess the electoral process in general and more specifically, the role of each election stakeholder. Conclusions reached from the discussions form the basis for Situation Room's press statements and report on the election.

Deployment of Observers

Situation Room deployed observers across the sixteen Local Government Areas of the State who set out early to polling units to observe the election process and collation of results.

The observers were deployed to look out for the following:

- » Early distribution and deployment of personnel and materials.
- » Timely opening of polls.
- » Knowledge of election procedures by INEC ad hoc staff.
- » Voting procedures particularly the efficacy of the BVAS.
- » Electronic transmission of polling unit results and upload to INEC Results Viewing Portal (IRev Portal); and
- » Collation process.

Arrival of Poll officials, materials and opening of polls

Situation Room observers and partners note a general early arrival of Poll officials and election materials, culminating in prompt set-up of the polling unit and opening of polls. By 8:30am, officials and materials were already present in 95% of the polling units observed.

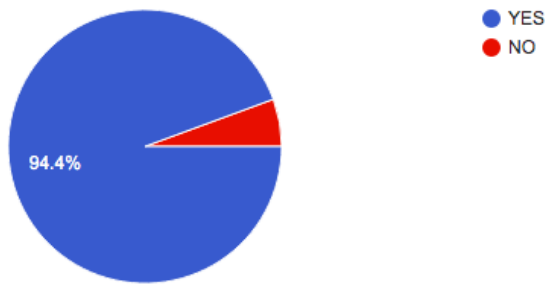


Figure 3.1: Arrival Poll officials at the PUs by 9:30am during the Ekiti State Governorship election 2022

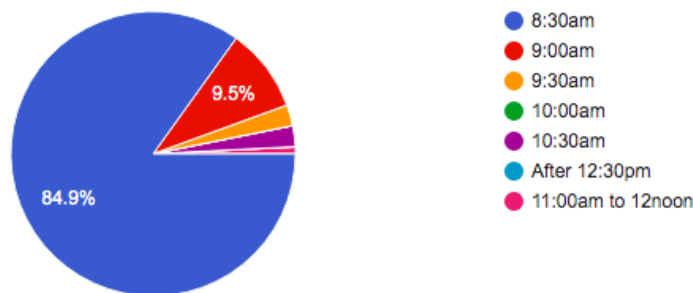


Figure 3.2: Opening of Polls during the Ekiti State Governorship Election 2022

With respect to commencement of poll, Situation Room note that set-up of the voting cubicles was done early and voting commenced at 8:30am in 84.9% of the polling unit observed. This is a marked improvement of the Anambra State Governorship election held in November 2021 and the Area Councils Elections of the Federal Capital Territory held in February 2022.

Despite the gain, the voting cubicles were however placed in a way that could compromise the secrecy of the ballot and encourage vote trading in many polling units. Situation Room notes that many polling units are located in private houses and compounds contrary to claims by INEC that the Commission had moved polling units to public spaces during its "Expansion of Voters Access to Polling Units Exercise" in 2021.

Voting, BVAS and Knowledge of election procedures by Poll Officials

Situation Room observation shows that there was no report of BVAS failing to authenticate voters by fingerprints and facials in 62.6% of the polling units observed. Also, there was no reported incident of low battery and malfunctioning of the BVAS from 82% of the polling units. However, Situation Room observed delays and malfunctioning BVAS machines in some voting units such as PU 002 Igbaletere by Mechanic Workshop, Ward 6 Ado Okeyinmi, Ado-Ekiti LGA where the Machine was going on and off intermittently, PU 007 LA Primary School Oke Afin, Otun Ward III and PU018 Igogo Ward II both in Moba LGA where the BVAS failed, and PU 014, Ward I Okemesi, Ekiti West LGA, amongst others.

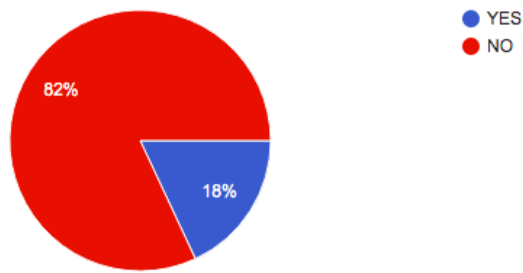


Figure 3.3 Was there any challenge with the BVAS such as low battery and malfunctioning?

How many cases of FAILED FINGERPRINT AND FACIAL AUTHENTICATION did you observe while at the polling unit?

139 responses

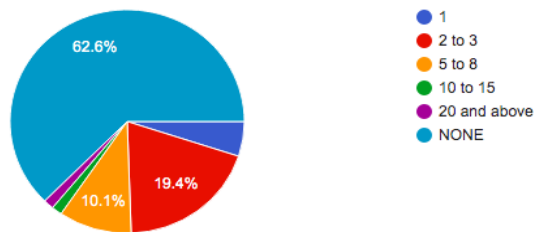


Figure 3.4: Cases of failed fingerprints and facial authentication during EkitiDecides 2022

Why there was a recorded improvement with the functionality of the BVAS, the average accreditation time by the system in some locations was below expectation.

Reports from field observers indicate that it takes at least 3 minutes to accredit a voter using the BVAS in 41% of the voting locations observed. Going by this, the BVAS would have successfully accredited 20 voters per hour on the average in the affected voting locations. Consequently, INEC will need to double its effort to improve on the turnaround time of the BVAS of one minute per voter for a seamless process on election day. Furthermore, INEC's distribution of the BVAS devices was not proportionate to the population of registered voters by polling unit.

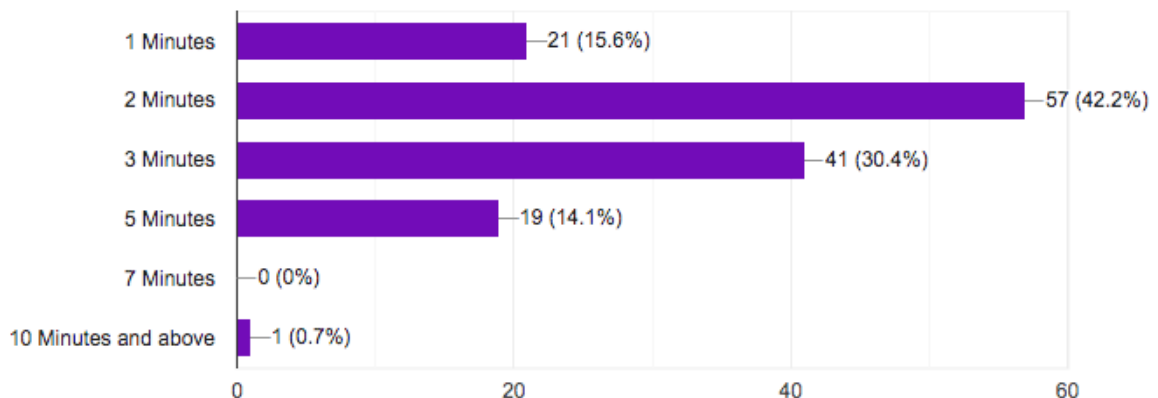


Figure 3.5: Average Accreditation time using BVAS

Priority Voting and Availability/Use of Assistive Materials for Persons with Disabilities and Vulnerable Groups

Situation Room notes that poll officials generally gave priority to persons with disabilities, pregnant women and elderly people in many of the polling units observed. However, most voting cubicles were not accessible to some categories of voters with disabilities while citizens generally refused to accord people with albinism the same priority consideration at the polling units.

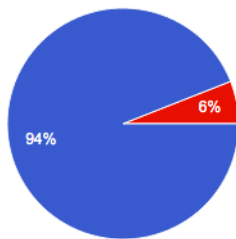


Figure 3.6: Priority Voting

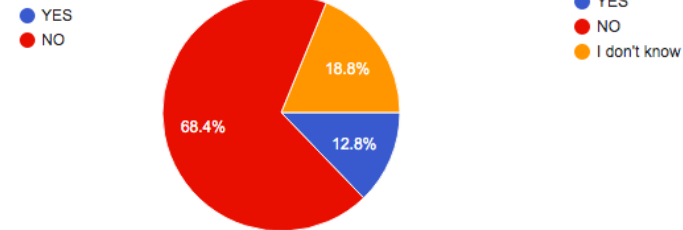


Figure 3.7: Voting aids for PWDs

Situation Room and its partners note that voting aids for voters with disabilities were not readily available, and where they were, PWD voters would have to ask for it before it is brought out by Presiding Officers except in PU 008 Open Space in front of Government Special School for the Blind, Oke Osun, Ikere Ekiti where the Presiding officer deployed braille guides effectively.

Electronic Transmission of PU Results/Upload to IReV Portal and Collation Process

With regards to INEC Result Viewing Portal (IReV Portal), Situation Room observed that the portal went live on time, with 45% of the polling unit results already uploaded as at 5:00pm on election-day. By 9:00pm, the upload was at 98% while collation of results was fully completed in 10 of the 16 LGAs. This is a marked improvement from the FCT Area Councils' Elections in February 2022.

Votes Trading

Situation Room's report of Anambra State Governorship election 2021 observed that vote buying could gain a new level of "momentum" in Ekiti State Governorship election 2022 if perpetrators are left unpunished in view of the history of the State. Early signs leading to the election revealed the possibility of this prediction. Sadly, this became a reality as incidents of vote buying and selling continued unabatedly on election day. This follows a familiar pattern of similar incidences across the country, and in particular, the 2014 Governorship election in Ekiti State. The description of this phenomenon as "Stomach Infrastructure" in the 2014 election has evolved into a new nomenclature now described as "See and Buy". The ability of Ekiti politicians to make light of such a grave violation of extant law is most unfortunate. This occurrence put into questions the

willingness of the Security Agencies to contain this menace, despite numerous reports and videos of young voters excitedly displaying money collected for their votes.

Turnout and Conduct of voters;

Generally, voters conducted themselves in a civil and lawful manner within and outside the polling units in Ekiti except for the vote trading. Also, the turnout of voters was not bad, as it was at close to 50% when compared to the number of PVCs collected. No doubt, the turnout could have been higher if voters were effectively redistributed into the newly created polling units.

Presence and Conduct of Party Agents

Party agents were present at most polling units observed by the Situation Room. Observers identified mostly agents of the All Progressives Congress (APC), People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the Social Democratic Party (YPP) in majority of polling units observed. Of the 16 political parties on the ballot, the APC, PDP and SDP had agents in at least 90% of the polling units visited while the remaining political parties respectively had agents in less than 25% of these locations.

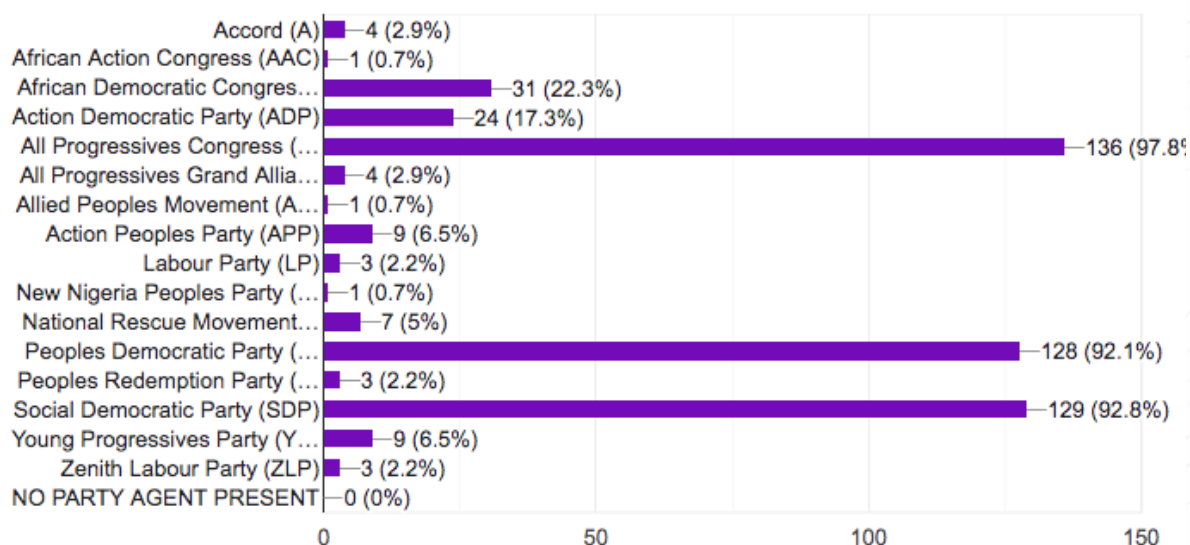


Figure 3.8: Presence of Party Agents at PUs

Conduct of Security Agents

Situation Room observed an adequate and early deployment of security personnel to the polling units. Security agents were present before the arrival of poll officials at almost all the polling units observed and conducted themselves in a proper manner. However, the impact of their presence was not felt as they failed to halt the apparent vote buying witnessed by observers in virtually all the polling units. The Security personnel looked away until voting process has ended in majority of the polling units and sorting of votes

commenced before they started making effort to arrest perpetrators of vote trading on election day. This is a clear failure on the part of Security institutions.

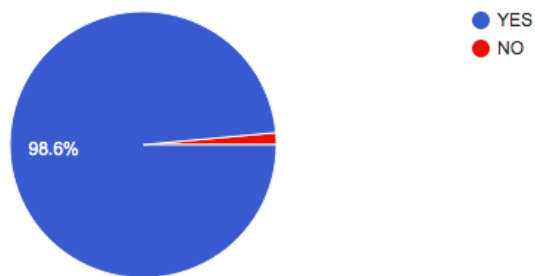


Figure 3.9: Presence of Security agents at PUs

Officials of Nigeria Police Force, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Police Service Commission (PSC) and Nigerian Army were stationed in different locations in Ekiti State.



POST-ELECTION OBSERVATION

Vote tabulation and Declaration of Results

Following the conclusion of the bye-election held in Ekiti East 1 State Constituency, INEC declared Fatoba Oluwole Abraham of APC who scored 5,870 votes the winner of the election. Fatoba defeated Akintunde Adeyemi Adeniran of PDP who scored 3,452 votes, and three other candidates.

INEC concluded the collation process and announced the results of the Governorship election at the early hours of Sunday, 19th June 2022 in Ado-Ekiti. The Returning Officer for the election, Prof. Kayode Adebowale who is the Vice Chancellor of University of Ibadan declared Abiodun Oyebanji of APC as winner having scored the highest votes in the election. Mr. Oyebanji scored 187, 057 votes to defeat the former Governor of the State, Olusegun Oni of SDP who scored 82,211 votes, Olabisi Kolawole of PDP who scored 67,457 votes and 12 other candidates in the election.

According to the Returning Officer, 363,438 voters were accredited for the election, while the actual votes cast is 360,753 out of which 8,888 votes were rejected and 351,865 were valid.

STATISTICS	2014	2018	2022
REGISTERED VOTERS	733,766	909,585	989,224
ACCREDITED VOTERS	369,257	405,861	363,438
VALID VOTES	350,366	384,594	351,865
REJECTED VOTES	10,089	18,857	8,888
VOTES CAST	360,455	403,451	360,753
NUMBER OF PVCs COLLECTED	371,925	576,346	749,065*
PERCENTAGE TURNOUT	50.32%	44.36%	36.74%

* Figure as at 13th June 2022

Reactions of Political Parties and Candidates

The candidate of the PDP in the election and the second runner-up in the election, Olabisi Kolawole has congratulated the winner of the election while the first runner-up, Olusegun Oni of SDP has expressed his interest to contest the outcome of the election at the Tribunal.



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

The governorship election was generally peaceful across the sixteen Local Government Areas of State Councils, as voters exercised their civic duty at the polling units without any rancour.

- » Situation Room commends all the individuals and groups, who made efforts to mediate peace and reduce political tension in the lead up to the election.
- » There was a marked improvement in INEC's administration and logistics of the election, with the BVAS performing better in Ekiti governorship election than the previous ones. However, there is a need to improve on the efficiency of the system to deliver a faster accreditation process.
- » Election stakeholders need to examine the problem of average turnout of voters

- on election day, with a view to unravel the root causes and turn the tide.
- » Incidents of vote trading has continued to rise in Nigeria, and the security agencies' indifference attitude towards curbing this menace. Situation Room strongly condemns this blatant violation of the electoral law.
 - » Consequently, the National Assembly and the indeed the Federal Ministry of Justice needs to urgently conclude the process for establishin the National Electoral Offences Commission to prosecute electoral offenders.

Situation Room hopes that lessons would be drawn from this process to improve future elections in Nigeria. Therefore, call on all stakeholders to continue to sustain and improve on their efforts and support towards an improved electoral process as we heads into the 2023 General Elections.

RECOMMENDATION

1) The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

- » Situation Room calls on the INEC to sustain the gains recorded in Ekiti especially on logistics arrangements and early commencement of polls in the upcoming Osun State Governorship and 2023 General elections.
- » Ensure an improved delivering from BVAS especially the turnaround time for accrediting a vote.
- » Carry out extensive voter education to raise awareness on the new polling units created in its Expansion of Access to Polling Units exercise in 2021, as well as the procedure for allotting voters to these new locations or redistribute votes based on present residential location to limit overcrowding in some polling units on election day.
- » Ensure that distribution of Bimodal Voter's Accreditation System devices is proportionate to the number of registered voters.
- » Relocate polling units from private residences and compounds to public places ahead of the Osun Governorship election 2022 and the 2023 General Elections.
- » Review its failure to distribute permanent voter's cards to some new registrants, and ensure that every new registrant get his/her PVCs before the General Elections in 2023.
- » Re-opening CVR exercise in Ekiti State inline with the ongoing nationwide exercise since the process of the Governorship election is over.

- » Review the accessibility of polling units with registered PWD voters, ensure that collation officers announce PWD voters information and statistics alongside announcement of results.

2) Political Parties

- » Political parties should actively engage in voter mobilisation to address the trend of diminishing voter turnout.
- » Make a deliberate and coordinated effort to shun voters' inducement at all costs.

3) Security Agencies

- » Situation Room is seriously concerned by the unwillingness of the Security agencies to prevent vote buying or prosecute offenders, even though the law empowers them to do so. Therefore, Security Agencies should rise up to their duties in this regard as a matter of urgency, and as we heads into Osun State Governorship Election scheduled to hold on Saturday, 16th July 2022.
- » Situation Room enjoins security agencies to continue to build on the gains they have recorded in election security in recent times by remaining civil and non-partisan in their conducts in the upcoming elections.
- » Continue to ensure the welfare of its personnel deployed for an election, and conduct adequate training ahead of the deployment.
- » Work in synergy to with other sister agencies.

4) Legislature and Executive

- » The National Assembly should prioritize and urgently conclude its legislative actions on the Electoral Offences Commission (Establishment) Bill.
- » The President should engage with the National Assembly to ensure there are no disagreements that could lead to back and forth on the Electoral Offences Commission Bill as was with the case of several Electoral Bills recently passed.

5) Civil Society Organisations

- » Intensify civic and voter education to improve voters turnout and the importance of mandate protection.
- » Increase enlightenment campaigns on the danger of vote trading.
- » Deepen collaboration with the media to track and factcheck fake news and misinformation during elections.

APPENDICES – STATEMENTS ISSUED BY THE SITUATION ROOM

SITUATION ROOM'S PRELIMINARY STATEMENT ON THE EKITI STATE GOVERNORSHIP ELECTIONS 2022

Issued in Ado-Ekiti at 9:30am: Friday, 17th June 2022

On Saturday, 18th June 2022, residents of Ekiti State will come out to vote in the Governorship Election. The Nigeria Civil Situation Room (Situation Room) has convened in Ado-Ekiti to observe the Governorship Election. Situation Room has deployed election observers across the 16 Local Government Areas of the State and will also receive reports from its partners and networks as part of its observation of the election.

Having watched the campaigns period leading up to the election, Situation Room notes that the political environment in the State is relatively peaceful at the moment. However, there have been reports of security threats amongst different factions of the drivers' union supporting various political parties which led to the death of one person. Situation Room is worried that if the reported factions within the drivers' union are not appropriately cautioned by the Security Agencies, the conflict may be a threat to the relatively peaceful environment given the State's history of political violence.

This Governorship election is the first election to be conducted following the enactment of a new Electoral Law. Thus, expectations are high especially with regards to early deployment of poll officials and materials, logistics, election security and inclusivity, amongst others. Situation Room notes the assurances given by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to conduct a transparent election and the Nigeria Police to provide adequate security to voters and poll officials professionally.

Accordingly, Situation Room hereby outlines its expectations for Ekiti State Governorship Election 2022 as follows:

- 1. INEC and Election Administration:-** Situation Room expects an improved administration and management of the 2022 Ekiti State Governorship Election and asks INEC to take steps to hold poll officials to account for any violation of its guidelines. Situation Room observed the smooth distribution of sensitive election materials from INEC's State Headquarters to Registration Area Centres (RACs) and Super RACs in some locations. Situation Room commends INEC's novel approach in the logistics and early distribution of sensitive election materials two days to the election day. Given that Ekiti State does not have any difficult terrain, Situation Room expects an early deployment of materials and officials on election day.

Situation Room will be holding INEC accountable for its commitment and assurances, and will look out specifically for the following on Saturday, 18th June 2022:

- » Early distribution and deployment of personnel and materials.
- » Timely opening of polls.
- » Knowledge of election procedures by INEC ad hoc staff.
- » Voting procedures particularly the efficacy of the BVAS.
- » Electronic transmission of polling unit results and upload to INEC Results Viewing Portal (IRev Portal); and
- » Transparent Collation process.

Situation Room notes the position of the Electoral Act 2022 and INEC's Guidelines for the conduct of elections regarding the mandatory use of the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) and welcomes the Commission's assurance that the accreditation devices are properly configured and ready for the election. During Situation Room's interaction with the INEC REC a few days back, he confirmed that a mock election was held across the three Senatorial Districts. These assurances are particularly uplifting following the noticeable shortcomings of the devices during the Anambra State Governorship Election and recently conducted FCT Area Councils' Elections. The functionality of the BVAS will therefore form a critical part of the Situation Room's observation of the electoral process.

Situation Room expects to see polling officials properly apply the provisions in the INEC Guidelines to support Persons with Disabilities with assistive materials during this election especially as the Electoral Act 2022 now makes it mandatory for INEC to take reasonable steps to ensure that PWDs, special needs and vulnerable persons are assisted during voting and provided with suitable means of communication during polls.

- 2. Security Agencies:-** Situation Room calls on the Nigeria Police to enforce to the latter its Operational Guidelines for Police Officers on Election Duty. It is hoped that officers engaged in the Governorship Election are properly trained on the guidelines and that all personnel will be identified by their name tags. The Security Agencies deployed for the election must demonstrate their commitment to non-partisanship and ensure adequate security for the election, in a manner that does not allow or encourage violence to be used as a tool for vote suppression.

We further call on the Police Force to document evidence of violence and vote-buying in order to prosecute the perpetrators as well as share this information with INEC.

- 3. Political Parties:-** Situation Room calls on political parties participating in the Governorship election to conduct themselves in a manner that is devoid of violence and restrain their supporters. In this vein, Situation Room commends the political parties for their participation in the governorship debate, and the signing of the Peace Accord sends hope that they will abide by the principles of the Accord. Situation Room further calls on political parties to do everything possible to avoid inducement of voters in any form and the propagation of fake news. The past Governorship elections in 2014 and 2018 were fraught with widespread vote buying even popularising the term "stomach infrastructure" as a synonym for voter inducement.

Conclusion: - Situation Room commends the citizens of Ekiti State for the high rate in PVCs collected and calls on all eligible voters in Ekiti State to go a step further by actually coming out enmasse to peacefully exercise their civic responsibility tomorrow Saturday, 18th June 2022. Situation room calls on the people of Ekiti State to shun all forms of voter inducement and vote their conscience.

SIGNED:

Ene Obi

Convener, Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room

Asma'u Joda

Co-Convener, Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room

James Ugochukwu

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INTERIM STATEMENT BY THE NIGERIA CIVIL SOCIETY SITUATION ROOM ON EKITI STATE GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION 2022

Issued: In Ado-Ekiti at 2:30pm, Saturday, 18th June 2022

The Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room (Situation Room) is observing the Ekiti State Governorship election and continues to closely watch the process in the 16 Local Government Areas of the State until it is concluded by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

At this time, Situation Room makes the following observations:

General: The election has been generally peaceful, with voters conducting themselves in a civil manner in most of the polling units. The redistribution of voters done by INEC still does not take care of the issue of large number of voters in some polling units as many new polling units had abysmally low numbers while older polling units remain overcrowded. There were also polling units sited in private residences such as PU006 Omiragunsin's House, Okemesi Ward 1, Ekiti West LGA and PU003 in front of Ezekiel's House Iroro/Ita Alafia Iroro Imegun, Ward 3 Araromi Omuo, Ekiti East LGA.

Logistics and Commencement of Poll: Situation Room observed early arrival of Poll officials and election materials in 93% of the polling units observed. Set up was done promptly and polls commenced before 9:00am in at least 88% of the locations. This is an improvement of both the Anambra State Governorship Election 2021 and FCT Area Councils Elections 2022.

Bi-Modal Verification Accreditation System (BVAS): Our observations indicate the BVAS was functional in at least 76% of the voting locations. However, there have been many reports of delays and malfunctioning BVAS machines in some voting units especially those with many registered voters. Examples of the locations where the machines malfunctioned are PU 002 Igbaletere by Mechanic Workshop, Ward 6 Ado Okeyinmi, Ado-Ekiti LGA where the Machine was going on and off intermittently, PU 007 LA Primary School Oke Afin, Otun Ward III and PU018 Igogo Ward II both in Moba LGA where the BVAS failed, and PU 014, Ward I Okemesi, Ekiti West LGA, amongst others. Furthermore, INEC's distribution of the BVAS devices was not proportionate to the population of registered voters by polling unit.

Priority Voting: Situation Room notes that poll officials gave priority to PWD voters, elderly persons and pregnant women in most of the polling units observed. However, citizens refused to recognise people with albinism as persons with disabilities (PWDs), thereby failed to accord them special consideration at the polling units. Also, voting cubicles were not easily accessible to PWDs.

Vote Buying: Situation Room received reports of widespread vote buying by political party agents across the 16 Local Government Areas of the State. In many instances, voters were induced with money ranging from ₦4,500 to ₦10,000 by asking them to flag completed ballot papers as proof of voting in the specified manner in what they term "See and Buy". Situation Room strongly condemns this blatant violation of the electoral law.

Presence, Conduct and Welfare of Security Officials: Security officials deployed for the election were diverse and cuts across Police Officers, Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) etc. Situation Room notes that security officials arrived the polling units on time and were civil in their conduct. However, the impact of their presence was not felt in voters' coordination at most of the polling units. Also, the Police failed to halt the apparent vote buying witnessed by observers in virtually all the polling units.

Conclusion: We call on the people of Ekiti State to continue to conduct themselves in a peaceful and responsible manner. We wish to remind the Police Authority of their responsibilities to halt and apprehend those involved in voters' inducement and maintain law and order throughout the process and beyond. Situation Room calls on INEC to ensure that the on-going process is concluded transparently and credibly.

SIGNED:

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SECOND INTERIM STATEMENT BY THE NIGERIA CIVIL SOCIETY SITUATION ROOM ON EKITI STATE GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION 2022

Issued: In Ado-Ekiti at 7:00am, Sunday, 19th June 2022

The Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room (Situation Room) observed the Ekiti State Governorship election held on Saturday, 18th June 2022 and received field reports from its observers and network partners.

In addition to our earlier Statements on the election, Situation Room makes the following observation on the field reports and analysis:

General: The election was generally peaceful, with voters playing a key part in the peaceful election environment. The Situation Room commends voters for their comportment at the various polling centres.

Situation Room notes that INEC's strategy of voters' redistribution failed to address the problem of over concentration of voters in some polling units. A glaring example was the situation at Surajudeen School, Ado Dallimore (Ward 9), Ado Ekiti LGA, which had about five thousand registered voters shared between just two polling units. Some of the voters complained that their request for transfer of registration to their preferred polling units was not approved before this exercise. Several of the polling units were sited in private residences and compounds in Ekiti State contrary to claims by INEC that the Commission had moved polling units to public spaces during its "Expansion of Voters Access to Polling Units Exercise" in 2021. We hope that INEC will properly address this lingering issue going into the 2023 General Elections.

Logistics and Commencement of Poll: Situation Room notes an appreciable improvement in INEC's logistics and election administration, especially with the early arrival of election officials and materials at the polling units, leading to early opening of polls. This is a welcome improvement from what was observed in both the Anambra State Governorship Election 2021 and FCT Area Councils Elections 2022.

Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS): Our observations indicate the BVAS was functional in at least 76% of the voting locations. However, there have been many reports of delays and malfunctioning BVAS machines in some voting units especially those with many registered voters. Examples of the locations where the machines malfunctioned are PU 002 Igbaletere by Mechanic Workshop, Ward 6 Ado Okeyinmi, Ado-Ekiti LGA where the Machine was going on and off intermittently, PU 007 LA Primary School Oke Afin, Otun Ward III and PU018 Igogo Ward II both in Moba LGA where the BVAS failed, and PU 014, Ward I Okemesi, Ekiti West LGA, amongst others.

Also, reports from field observers indicate that it takes at least 3 minutes to accredit a voter using the BVAS in 41% of the locations observed. Going by this, the BVAS would have successfully accredited 20 voters per hour on the average in the affected voting locations. Consequently, INEC will need to double its effort to improve on the

turnaround time of the BVAS of one minute per voter for a seamless process on election day. Furthermore, INEC's distribution of the BVAS devices was not proportionate to the population of registered voters by polling unit.

Priority Voting: Situation Room notes that poll officials gave priority to PWD voters, elderly persons and pregnant women in most of the polling units observed. However, citizens refused to recognise people with albinism as persons with disabilities (PWDs), thereby failed to accord them special consideration at the polling units while voting cubicles were not easily accessible to other PWDs. Assistive materials such as braille guides and magnifying glasses for PWD voters were scarcely available. Where available, such as in PU 008 Open Space in front of Government Special School for the Blind, Oke Osun, Ikere Ekiti, they were in standard quality and the Presiding officer deployed them effectively.

Vote Buying: Situation Room observed that the issue of vote buying, and selling has continued unabatedly. This follows a familiar pattern of similar incidences across the country, and in particular, the 2014 Governorship election in Ekiti State. The description of this phenomenon as "Stomach Infrastructure" in the 2014 election has evolved into a new nomenclature now described as "See and Buy". The ability of Ekiti politicians to make light of such a grave violation of extant law is most unfortunate. Situation Room strongly condemns this blatant violation of the electoral law.

Presence and Conduct of Security Officials: Security officials deployed for the election were diverse and cut across the Police, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), etc. Situation Room notes that security officials arrived the polling units on time and were civil in their conduct. However, the widespread presence of the Security personnel did not deter vote trading. Situation Room condemns the several videos that were shared on social media of young voters displaying the money collected for their votes. Situation Room commends EFCC for the arrests of suspected persons involved in votes buying and hopes that these cases will lead to prosecution if the evidence is found to be germane.

Electronic Transmission of polling unit results to INEC Results' Viewing Portal (IREV Portal): Situation Room observed that INEC's IReV portal went live on time, with 45% of the polling unit results already uploaded as at 5:00pm on election day. By 9:00pm, the upload was at 98% with results from 10 of the 16 LGAs fully uploaded. This is a marked improvement from the FCT Area Councils' Elections in February 2022.

Collation of Results: Reports from Situation Room observers reveal that sorting and counting of votes at the polling units went well. The collation process commenced peacefully towards the evening on the election-day and extended into the night.

Conclusion: We commend the people of Ekiti State for their peaceful conduct throughout the voting process. The turnout of voters was also very good and at an average of almost 50% when compared to the number of PVCs collected. We call on the people of Ekiti State to continue to collect the remaining PVCs before the General Elections in 2023. Situation Room hopes that lessons would be drawn from this process to improve future elections in Nigeria.

SIGNED:

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GALLERY





ABOUT SITUATION ROOM

The Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room provides a co-ordinating platform for civil society engagement on governance issues. It is also a platform for information sharing among civil society groups working on elections and topical national issues. It intervenes in the electoral process by promoting collaboration, proactive advocacy and rapid response to crisis in the electoral process.

The Situation Room provides a forum of advance planning, scenario building, evidence based analysis, constructive engagement with various stakeholders in the electoral process and observation of elections. PLAC hosts the secretariat of the Situation Room and is a member of its steering committee.



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