



CDD ELECTION ANALYSIS CENTRE

Final Election Day Report

2019 Presidential and
National Assembly Elections

#NigeriaDecides**2019**

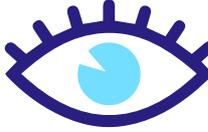
Final Election-Day Report:

2019 Presidential and National Assembly Elections 2019

Preamble

The Centre for Democracy and Development deployed over 3500 field observers, spread across the country, for the 2019 Presidential and National Assembly Elections. The Centre also established a fake news tracking and analysis centre, and an Election Analysis Centre (EAC), comprising of leading experts on elections and democracy.

The first section of this report draws on observations from our field observers while the second part provides analysis of a number of issues and concerns arising from the observations.

3500 
OBSERVERS

systematically sampled and deployed to **30% (8804) of wards.**

15 FACT
CHECKERS 

Fake News tracking and fact checking

1.0 Part One: Election Day Observations

The CDD Election Analysis Centre commends Nigerians for trooping out in large numbers to cast their vote, in spite of the numerous challenges many of them faced, during the rescheduled presidential and national assembly elections on Saturday, February 23, 2019. For us, Nigerian voters are the winners of the elections, because they took ownership of the voting process as engaged citizens determined to make their votes count.

1.1 Opening of Polls

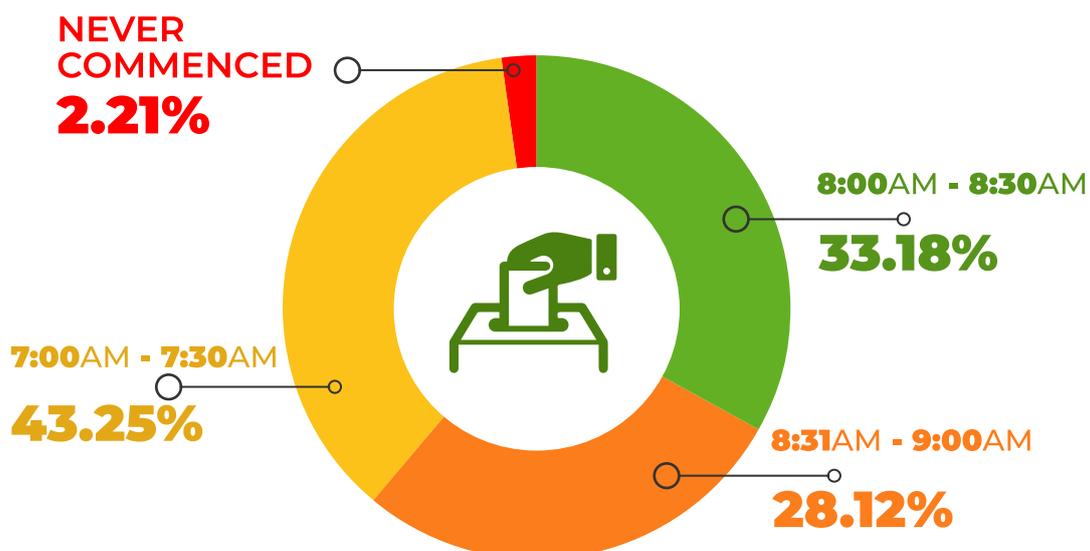
Polling officials arrived as early as 7am on election day and proceeded to make arrangements for voting to begin. Nevertheless, many polling units did not begin voting as late as 9am, while in a few polling units voting began between 12 noon and 1pm. The delay was due to logistics-related challenges, missing materials, and inadequate security deployment within or around the polling units.

The pie charts below provide graphic representations of our findings on the opening of polls across the country on Election Day.

INEC OFFICIALS ARRIVAL TIME



ACCREDITATION AND VOTING START-TIME



1.2 Logistics

The conduct of the elections went on smoothly in most parts of the country, with ad-hoc staff arriving on time. However, significant logistical challenges marred the conduct of the elections in many parts of the country. For example, ballot papers were insufficient in some polling units, while in others there were lack of other sensitive and non-sensitive materials, such as indelible ink, ballots, or result sheets.

1.3 Smart Card Readers

Smart card readers (SCRs) remain one of the most vital integrity checks of elections in Nigeria. Although many of them failed, malfunctioned SCRs were promptly corrected by roving staff of INEC, deployed for the purpose. It is noteworthy that generally most of the SCRs worked well and therefore played a role in ensuring the integrity of the elections. The Centre is concerned however that in a number of polling units where SCRs malfunctioned, voting proceeded without use of the machines.

1.4.1 Deployment of Security

Adequate security personnel were generally deployed for duty in many polling units but during voting process, there were instances of disruption such as in Lagos and Imo, where no security agent was either present or able to protect electoral officials and voters.

1.4.2 Electoral Violence

On election day, Nigerians woke to the news that there had been bomb blasts near Maiduguri, and also on the eve of election day there was report of Boko Haram attacks in Gaidam, Yobe State. We observed that this insecurity situation led to the relocation of voters from Gujba to Damaturu to cast their votes. Similarly, voters in Madagali were also relocated to a safe location in Adamawa to cast their votes. The Analysis centre further note with dismay the violence that marred the polls in some areas in Lagos, Ebonyi, Imo, Rivers, Osun, Oyo, Delta, Kogi and Akwa Ibom. We surmise over twenty people have so far been confirmed killed on election day. While ballot box snatching, voting disruption severely dampened morale in Lagos and some of the states mentioned. We are in particular concerned about the killing and abduction of election officials. More importantly, is the new trends of ballot snatching and destruction that leads to cancellation or inconclusive elections?

1.5 Secrecy of the Ballot

The secrecy of the ballot was violated, and voters cast their ballot in full public view in some polling units, where polling booths were not cordoned off or cubicles provided to ensure secrecy of the vote. In addition, it appears that some voters were able to take their phones into the

polling booth, as evidenced by pictures of thumb-printed ballot papers in circulation. This is in violation of the directive by the electoral umpire that no voters should use their phones in voting cubicles.

1.6 Vote Buying and other Electoral Malpractices

Vote buying was observed in some polling units in Bayelsa, Enugu, Kano and Osun states. Its patterns varied according to geopolitical zones. In some places, people are requested to put their names down and phone numbers so that they can be paid later. However, most disturbing is the situation where party agents go around with voters' register, hustle voters and negotiate for their votes. We also observed voters willingly selling their votes to the highest bidder. The telephone was a valuable tool utilised in the vote buying and selling transactions.

Other electoral malpractices reported by our observers include harassment of voters by thugs, arrest of observers by security agents, snatching of ballot boxes, stuffing of ballot papers.

Extension of Voting Period

The late commencement of voting in some polling units led to an open-ended extension of the voting period in some units. The extension was necessary to ensure that all voters, who were unable to vote within the stipulated voting period, for no fault of theirs, were given the opportunity to vote. While in some units the extension was for a few hours, in others, such as in Benue, Jigawa, Plateau and Zamfara states, voting continued into the morning of Sunday 24th February.

2. Part Two: Issues

2.1 Slow Response and Poor Communications by INEC

The Analysis Centre notes with concern the late response of INEC to election-related incidents and challenges referred to it from polling units on election day. Also, of concern is INEC's poor communication with stakeholders. For example, the postponement of voting in places such as Bonny in Rivers state should have been communicated properly and in a timely manner to the electorate and to explain the logistical challenges that have led to it.

2.2 Disruption of voting by VIPs

In spite of the warning from INEC that VIPs, notably elective public political officers, should not disrupt voting on election day, there were high profile incidents of disruption of voting processes through the abuse of the power of incumbency in states such as Akwa Ibom, Bauchi, Imo, Kogi, Kwara, Lagos and Rivers, where huge supporters escorted politicians to the polling units.

