



Statement on the Adamawa Gubernatorial Election Held Saturday February 4, 2012

Delivered at Nigerian Union of Journalists, Yola, Adamawa

National Steering Committee Members

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SUMMARY

Ladies and gentlemen of the press, on behalf of the National Steering Committee (NSC) of Project Swift Count, it is our pleasure to welcome you to this press conference to report on our observation finding for the February 4 Adamawa gubernatorial election.

As you already know, Project Swift Count is jointly carried out by the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN), Justice Development and Peace/Caritas (JDPC), the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and Transition Monitoring Group (TMG). Thus reflecting the rich diversity of Nigeria, it brings together Christians and Muslims, as well as organizations with citizen election observation and legal expertise.

For the Adamawa gubernatorial election, Project Swift Count deployed more than 800 observers to all 21 Local Government Areas (LGAs) – 800 stationary observers at polling units and more than 34 mobile observers.

Based on observer reports from a final representative random sample of 400 polling units in 21 LGAs, Project Swift Count finds that people of Adamawa were generally provided with a meaningful opportunity to exercise their right to vote. While there were some incidents creating concern about the electoral process in specific LGAs, notably in Girei, Mubi North, Madagali, Mayo-Belwa, Michika, Shelleng, and Toungo local government areas, these incidents did not undermine the overall credibility of the process.

Our findings today address the processes of accreditation of voters, the voting and counting at polling units, and the verification of the Adamawa gubernatorial election results as announced by INEC.

METHODOLOGY

The primary objective of Project Swift Count is to help promote free, fair, peaceful, credible and legitimate elections in Nigeria that are conducted in accordance with international and regional standards as well as the laws and the constitution of our country and the “*Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organisations*”.

The Swift Count methodology provides voters, political contestants and electoral authorities with an accurate, real-time picture of the conduct of the accreditation of voters, voting and counting. This serves as a deterrent to anyone tempted to manipulate the process. Project Swift Count will also be able to provide voters and political contestants greater confidence that the official results accurately reflect the ballots cast.

Swift Count uses samples of polling units for each election that have been carefully selected by trained Nigerian statisticians, using time-tested statistical principles to ensure that they are both representative and unbiased. This methodology, when matched with the latest technology—text messages transmitted by cell phones to a central data base—enables Project Swift Count to present an objective, nonpartisan, real-time picture of the conduct of the election and to verify the accuracy of the official results.

FINDINGS

Accreditation and Access to Polling Units

Accreditation of voters generally went smoothly and voters were able to access most polling units without significant problems. However, voters and poll officials were harassed or intimidated at more than 10% of polling units.

- In 38% of polling stations, polling official arrived by 7:30 am, a stark improvement from 18% for Kogi election
- In 58% of polling stations accreditation started by 9:00 am, a significant improvement from 34% for the Kogi election
- Similar to the presidential election, there were an average of 3 polling officials present as compared to 2 polling officials for the Kogi election
- On average, there were 4 political party agents present at polling units, as compared to 3 for Kogi and the presidential elections.
- Similar to the presidential election, security personnel were present in 95% of polling units.
- Observers reported that in 12% of polling station voters/polling officials were harassed or intimidated; this is a significant increase from 6 % during the presidential election

Voting Process

While voting generally went smoothly, there were serious problems of harassment or intimidation of voters/polling officials in certain LGAs.

- Similar to the Kogi election, voting began by 1 pm in 62% of polling stations, a stark decline from 80% during the presidential election
- Our observers reported in 84% of polling station, no one was permitted to vote without

a voter's card, compared to 94% during the presidential election

- Consistent with Kogi's election, observers reported that in 10% of polling stations, voters were accredited to vote after the accreditation process was closed; this is a slight improvement from the 15% during the presidential election
- Similar to Kogi poll, observers reported that in 11.7% of polling units, voters were not able to mark their ballots in secret.
- Our observers reported incidents of harassment or intimidation during the voting process at 16% of the polling units, a significant increase from 5% during the Kogi election and 6% during the presidential election; harassment was more pronounced in Girei, Mubi North, Michika, Shelleng, Madagali, and Mayo-Belwa local government areas.
- Consistent with the presidential and Kogi elections, our observers reported at 97% of the polling units that every ballot paper was stamped and signed before being given to voters

Counting Process

Generally, ballot counting was conducted without many problems. Findings related to the ballot counting process are consistent with those from the presidential and Kogi polls:

- Project Swift Count observers reported that the ballot papers were properly sorted and counted at 96% of polling units.
- Our observers reported at 94% of polling units that all political party agents present agreed with the results as announced by the polling officials.
- Our observers reported at 7% of the polling units that polling officials did not post the official results at the polling unit as required by INEC.
- Our observers reported at 6% of the polling units that incidents of harassment or intimidation occurred during the counting process.
- On average, there were 11 rejected ballots per polling unit.

CRITICAL INCIDENTS

A total of 58 critical incident reports were received from all mobile and stationary observers deployed by Project Swift Count in Adamawa state. While these incidents are serious and must be addressed they do not fundamentally undermine the integrity of the overall process.

- The most frequently reported incidents were: late arrival of election materials; vote buying; intimidation and harassment; and accreditation of voters after voting has commenced.
- The less frequently reported incidents include: ballot box stuffing/snatching; violence; vehicle without plate numbers; partisan polling officials; eligible accredited voters not permitted to vote; suspension of voting; shortage of election materials; underage voting; campaigning and campaign materials in or near polling units; and stealing of ballot papers.

VERIFICATION OF OFFICIAL INEC RESULTS

Using a random representative sample that included reports from 400 polling units Project Swift Count is able to verify the official results as announced by INEC. Our observers collected results as they are announced and posted at the polling unit.

The results below demonstrate that the official results as announced by INEC and Swift

Count estimates are very similar.

Table 1: Swift Count Adamawa Gubernatorial Election*

Political Parties	PSC Estimates %	Margin of Error (95% level of confidence)	PSC Range in %	INEC Announced Results %
ACN	37.83	2.22	35.61 - 40.06	36.6
ADC	0.50	0.05	0.44 - 0.55	0.4
ANPP	0.62	0.08	0.55 - 0.70	0.6
CPC	16.21	1.18	15.03- 17.39	16.3
PDP	44.84	2.08	42.76 – 46.92	46.0


* Results as announced by INEC on NTA on February 5, 2012.


The order and magnitude of the INEC results for each candidate is the same as the Swift Count estimates.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- Logistics challenges remain an issue. INEC's performance on delivery of election materials needs to be improved in future elections.
- INEC has significantly improved its observer accreditation process and it should continue this positive trend.
- Voter turnout was estimated at approximately 36% and this remains a concern in deepening the democratic process in Nigeria. This accentuates the need for continued civic education on the importance of participating in the electoral processes.
- Intimidation of voters, observers, and poll workers continue to be a problem. More effort needs to be made by governments, INEC, and civil society to educate communities on the importance of credible elections, and the necessity of citizen observation.
- While increasing security at polling units is of the utmost importance in future elections, the security personnel, working with INEC, have again demonstrated their restrained ability to positively contribute to democratic processes. Security agencies and forces should continue to support their personnel with additional training and education in advance of future electoral exercises.
- Secrecy of the ballot continues to be a problem, violating a fundamental dimension of democratic elections. INEC must review the processes in place allowing voters to cast ballots with their choice free from scrutiny. Polling officials, security forces, political parties, and citizens must promote this critically important aspect of voting.
- There is an urgent need for political parties and contestants to show maturity and respect for the voting process so as to forestall nefarious practices that will be debilitating to the democratic process.
- Additionally, police, prosecutors, INEC, and the judicial system must make an example of those who deliberately undermine Nigeria's aspirations for free, fair, and peaceful elections.

God Bless Nigeria


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