

EKITI ELECTION REPORT

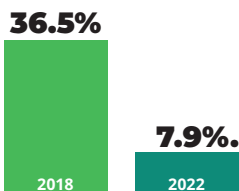


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BACKGROUND

Voter Turnout.



This represents a meagre 36.5% voter turnout. Compared to the 2018 guber election, voter turnout in the 2022 election dropped by 7.9%.

The Ekiti state's third off-cycle Gubernatorial election on the 18th of June 2022 across the 16 local government areas of the state. Out of the 18 duly registered political parties, 16 political parties contested in the elections for the seat of the Governor. Although 988,923 thousand voters were registered, only a total of 360,753 people out of the 988,923 registered voters came out to vote in the just concluded Ekiti state Governorship election. This represents a meagre 36.5% voter turnout. Compared to the 2018 guber election, voter turnout in the 2022 election dropped by 7.9%.

On the 19th of June 2022, the Independent National Electoral Commission announced the results of the elections:



Biodun Oyebanji of the All Progressive Congress (APC) won with a total of **187,057** casted votes



Segun Oni of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) was the runner up with a total of **82,211** casted votes



Bisi Kolawole of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) polled **67,457**.

This was the first election conducted under the tenets of the newly enacted Electoral Act of 2022. The act has introduced significant changes to pre-election such as early conduct of party primaries not later than 180 days before the general elections, the early commencement of campaigns from 90 days to 150 days before polling day and political neutrality of INEC personnel and penalty for contravention.

The statute gave the Independent National Electoral Commission a way to integrate new technologies into the electoral process lawfully. The INEC result viewing portal (iRev), which enables real-time uploading of polling unit level results to a result viewing site, and the Bimodal Voting Accreditation System (BVAS), used in the accreditation process of voters by fingerprint scanning or facial recognition, were the most commendable.

The focus of this report, however, is on how election day activities were carried out. It will concentrate on election-day events such as poll opening, gender equality, and innovations brought about by the legislation like compulsory accommodations for disabilities. As a think tank for media innovation and development in West Africa, the Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID), seeks to boost the region's journalism industry. It works based on the conviction that doing so will encourage democratic responsibility for inclusive and sustainable development. This is especially true regarding its sector-wide commitment to election observation.

The Media In National Election Project (MiNE), of the Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development, developed the election observation platform as a tool to engage young people in the nation's democratisation process and civic responsibility. These election observers act as objective gatekeepers who may verify whether the outcomes of an election accurately reflect the will of the people and were conducted in a free and unbiased manner.

METHODOLOGY



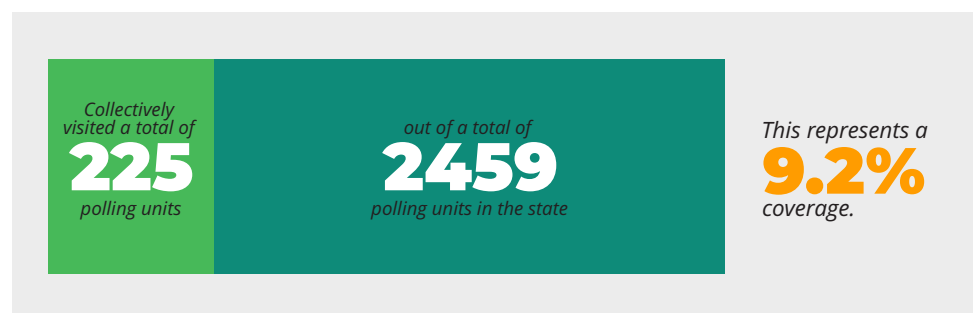
CJIDs' Media in Elections project deployed a total of 29 observers to the 16 LGAs of the state.



CJIDs' Media in Elections project deployed a total of 29 observers to the 16 LGAs of the state. These observers monitored the procedure using various criteria, including gender, inclusion, security, poll opening, and conformity with guidelines. To ensure that the observers could carry out this task, the project provided a 3-day training before deployment which improved their understanding of

- understanding of the election system and procedure
- a critical yet positive analysis of election activities
- an attitude of neutrality, impartiality, and non-interference in election matter
- Journalism ethics, fact-checking and security of election day.

After this, they were deployed as Local Government Area roaming observers from the 17-18th of June. The evaluation included reporting on-the-ground activities to the Election Analysis Centre (EAC), which was distributed to various media and fact-checking networks.

By the end of the elections, The network had collectively visited a total of 225 polling units out of a total of 2459 in the state. This represents a 9.2% coverage.



 L.G.A	 Number of Polling Units	Percentage (%)
Ado	24	10.67
Efon	13	5.78
Ekiti East	15	6.67
Ekiti South West	10	4.44
Ekiti West	7	3.11
Emure	7	3.11
Gbonyin	8	3.56
Ido-Osi	12	5.33
Ijero	22	9.78
Ikere	15	6.67
Ikole	30	13.33
Ilejemeje	14	6.22
Irepodun/Ifelodun	15	6.67
Ise/Orun	21	9.33
Moba	10	4.44
Oye	2	0.89
Total	225	100.0

Observation reports on 225 polling units were sent in, with the majority of the reports coming from Ikole (13 percent), Ado (10 percent) and Ijero (9.8 percent) LGA. Oye had reports on only 2 PUs. This report, which provides baseline information for the general election output, recognizes that the small sample size could limit the analysis and interpretations presented.

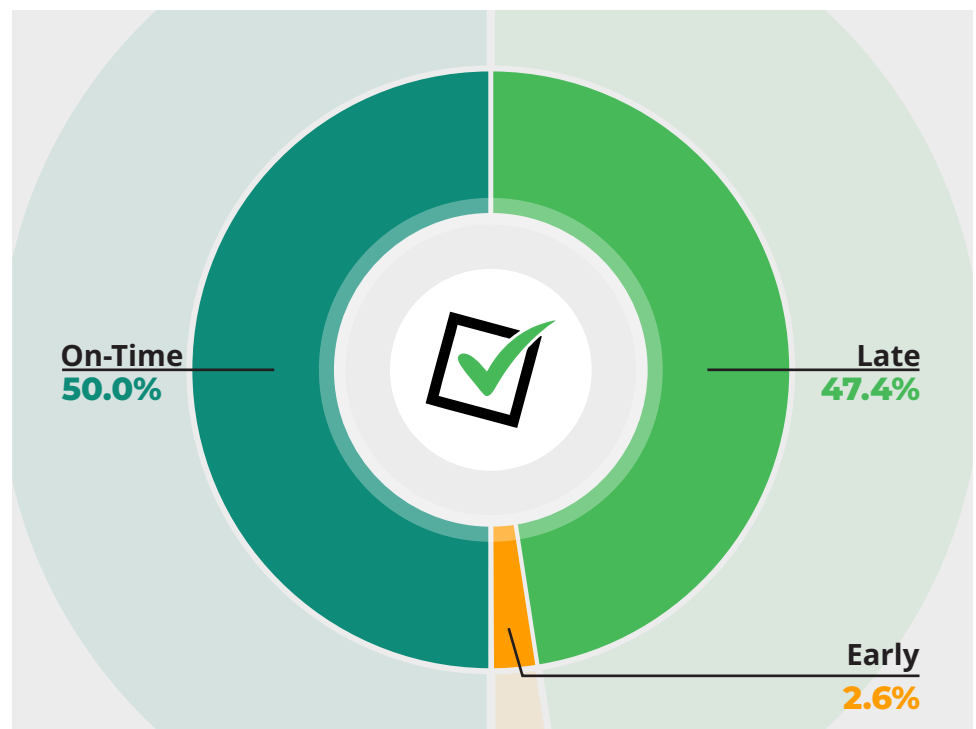
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Opening Polling Time Analysis



This report has the opening polling time stamps and analysis.

This report has the opening polling time stamps and analysis. At 11 a.m, observers had reported on the accreditation start time for seventy-eight (78) polling units. Half (39) of the reported polling units began accreditation and voting at 8:30 am¹. Eighteen (18) of the reported polling units that started late, started accreditation processes within ten (10) minutes of the INEC stipulated time and four (4) polling units started at least thirty (30) minutes later. The latest commencement for accreditation processes was reported to have begun fifty-six (56) minutes after the INEC stipulated time. While the polling unit with the earliest start time was reported for 8:28 a.m, two (2) minutes earlier.



¹The PU Presiding Officer Mr Awolola Oluwatosin explaining INEC direction to start accreditation by 8:30am, Quoted by the guardian, accessed on 7/11/2022 on <https://guardian.ng/news/accreditation-of-voters-begins-for-ekiti-state-guber-poll/>

As of the time of this report, the average time of commencement for all seventy-eight (78) units was analysed to have begun by 8:36 a.m, six (6) minutes later than the INEC stipulated time (8:30 a.m). Also at the time of this report, it appears that most of the polling units had commenced voting processes.

Due to the logistics and real-time activities of this election, the sample size for this analysis was relatively small and cannot be used as a true reflection of the election process at large. As of the time of this report, the frequency of polling units per observed (LGA) is shown in the chart below. Four (4) LGAs had only two (2) reports from our observers, while there was a maximum of ten (10) reports from three (3) LGAs.

GENDER AND INCLUSION



Analysis of the data from CJID observers showed that, on average, female polling officers (POs) were more than male polling officers (POs) in 11 of the LGAs (for polling units reported).

Recently, there has been a push for improved inclusion in all aspects of the electoral process. Through laws and processes, it is crucial that elections present avenues for the participation of women, persons with disabilities, and various marginalised groups. The observers were tasked with gathering information on the extent to which women and PWDs were involved in the process of elections by monitoring the gender distribution of election workers and voters in polling units that were visited.

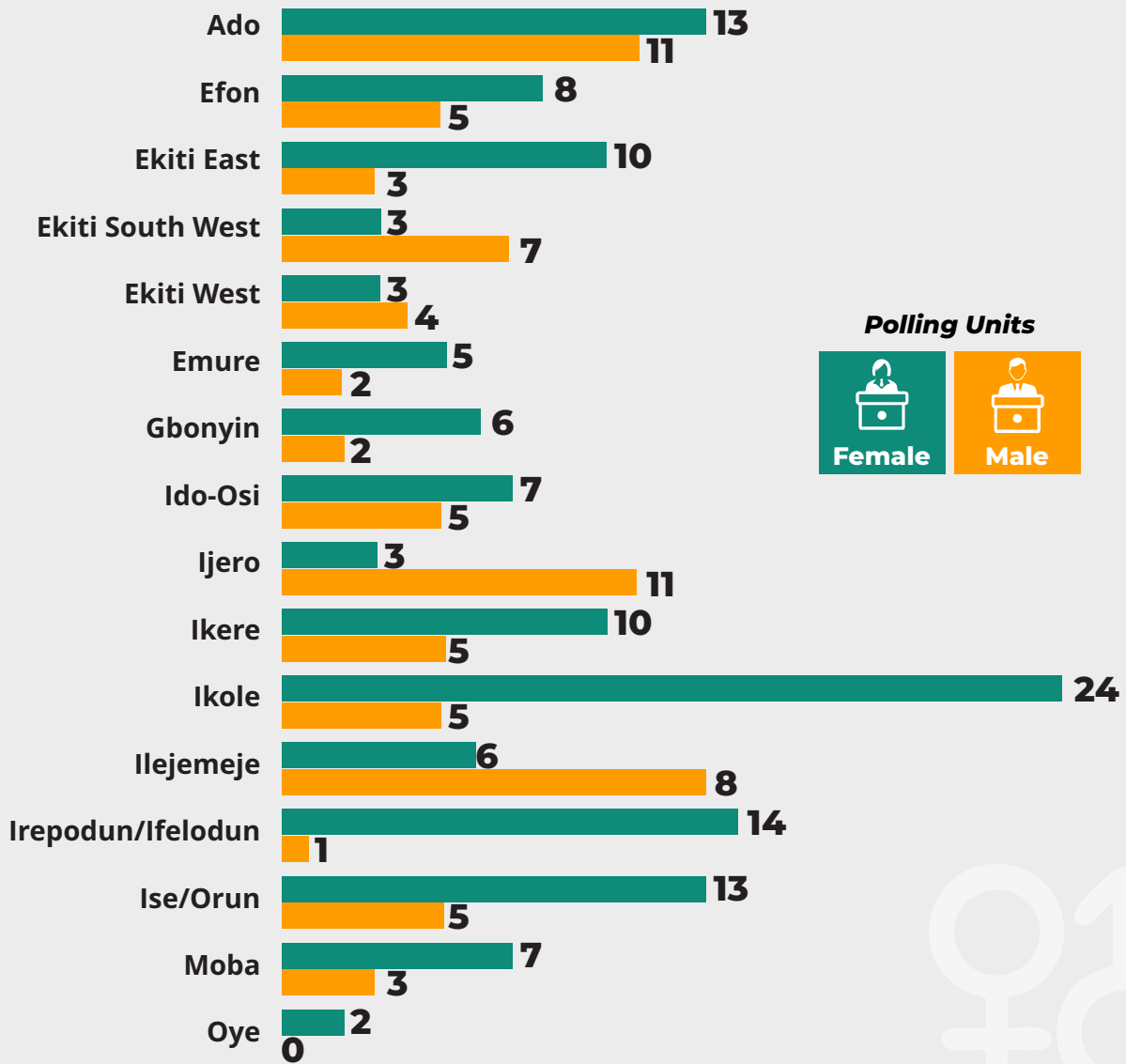
Frequency of Polling Unit Officers by Gender

Analysis of the data from CJID observers showed that, on average, female polling officers (POs) were more than male polling officers (POs) in 11 of the LGAs (for polling units reported). Females even outnumbered males by at least 2 to 1 in LGAs like Ekiti SW, Gbonyin, Ilejemeje and Oye. Moba LGA had the lowest female-to-male ratio of any of the LGAs. None of the reported polling units had more than four males or females. 13 PUs reported no male polling officer was present, while 21 PUs reported no female POs. This marks a welcome shift in favour of gender inclusion in the electoral process. Studies have shown that improved gender representation and diversity across institutions improve profitability, and creativity and generally outperform those that do not². Hence the gender sensitivity of the commission and commitment to having issues of gender equality and women's empowerment as a priority agenda will likely positively impact the electoral process in the short and long term.

²<https://www.chieflearningofficer.com/2017/07/26/improve-equality-access-among-gender-dominated-jobs>

Local Government Area	Polling Unit Officers		Ratio
	Female	Male	
Ado	1.71	2.00	0.85
Efon	1.69	1.62	1.05
Ekiti	1.33	2.27	0.59
Ekiti South-West	2.00	1.00	2.00
Ekiti West	1.57	1.43	1.10
Emure	1.43	2.14	0.67
Gbonyin	3.25	1.38	2.36
Ido-Osi	2.42	1.50	1.61
Ijero	1.59	1.64	0.97
Ikere	1.93	1.67	1.16
Ikole	1.97	1.37	1.44
Ilejemeje	2.14	1.07	2.00
Irepodun/Ifelodun	1.93	1.87	1.04
Ise/Orun	1.81	1.71	1.06
Moba	1.50	2.00	0.75
Oye	3.00	1.50	2.00

Additionally, observers reported on the gender of voters in the polling units monitored. Over half of our sampled PU reported observing more female voters than male voters. Only 5 of the PUs reported observing a balanced distribution between female and male voters. Eight of the PUs reported not having any voters at the time of observation.


Gender


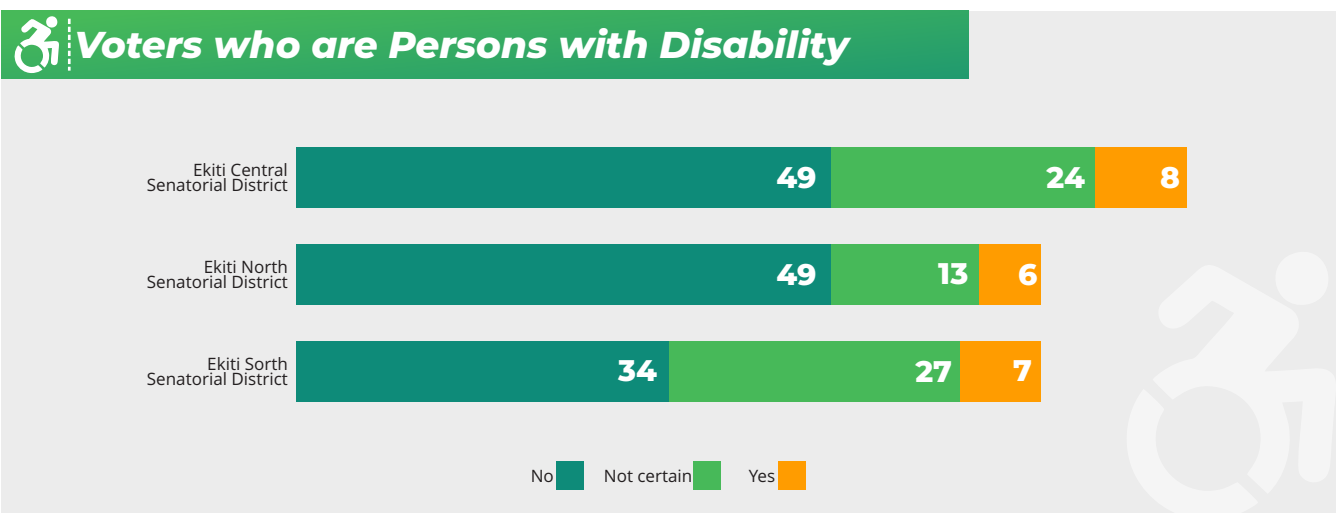
The advancement of disability rights in elections was one of the most laudable changes made to the electoral process by the new act. S.54 specifically subsection (2) states that:

“The Commission shall take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with disabilities, special needs and vulnerable persons are assisted at the polling place by the provision of suitable means of communication, such as Braille, large embossed print, electronic devices, sign language interpretation, or offsite voting in appropriate cases.”

Catering to the needs of various Persons With Disabilities (PWD) has always been at the commission's discretion. However, this was the first election where the commission was given the duty to ensure these provisions were made to ensure the environment was conducive to voters who are PWDs. In Nigeria, statistics on disability vary, as there is no clear data on the exact numbers of PWDs or types. However, most statistics put the number of PWDs in Nigeria between 19 million³ and 29 million⁴.

Observers reported seeing voters with disabilities at roughly 1 out of every 10 of the PUs visited. In contrast, observers said that in 29.3% of PUs covered, they were uncertain about the presence of PWDs taking part in the voting process. Ikole LGA had the highest number of PUs (5) that reported PWD sightings, Gboyin LGA had roughly 38% of its PUs confirm the presence of PWD while 4 of the LGAs reported no PWD presence.

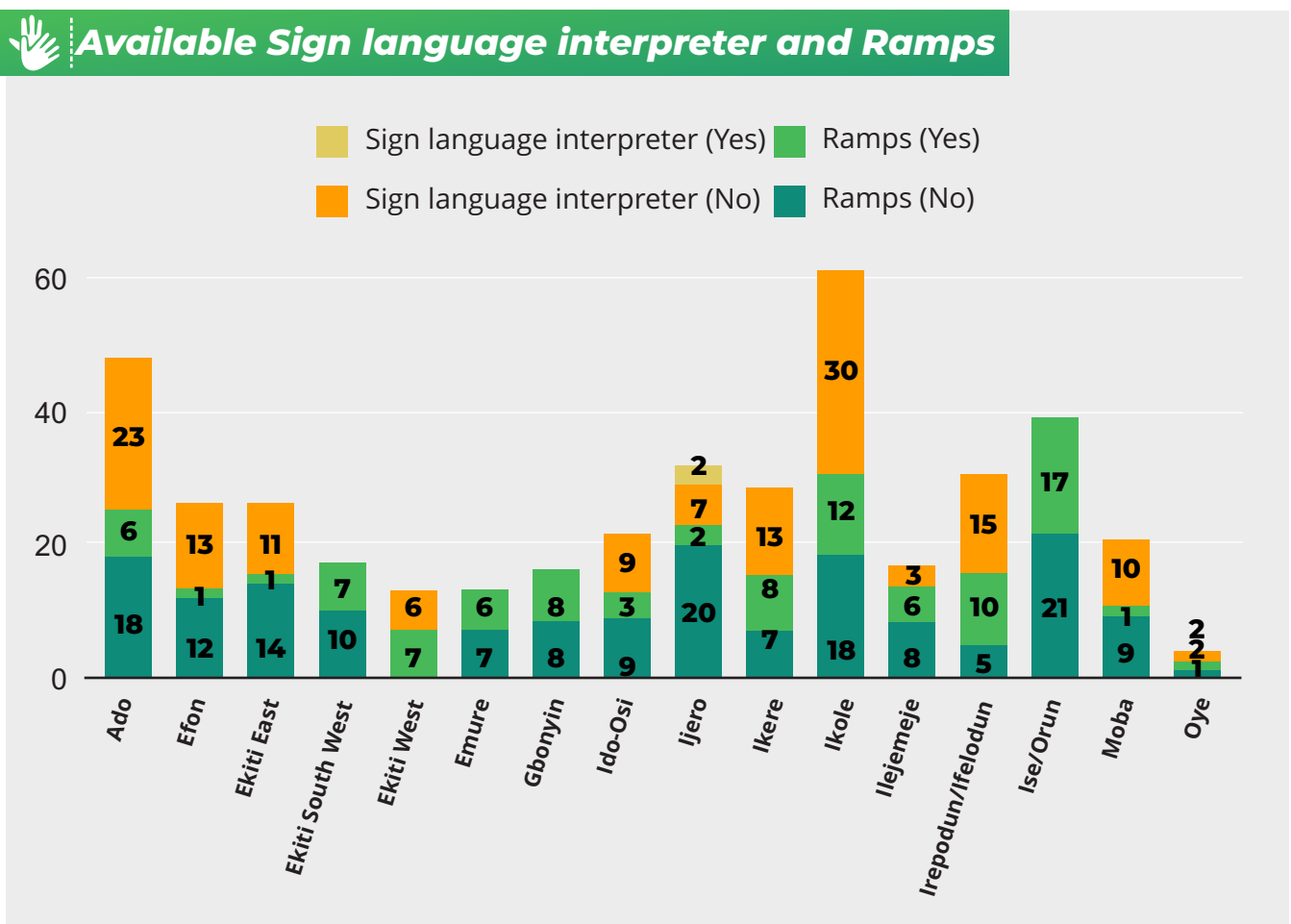
Accessibility of the Voters list to PWD was high with roughly 7 of every 10 PU visited reporting that the voters' list was accessible to PWDs. However, it was reported that Moba, Efon, Ise/Orun and Ilejemeje had the lowest rate of accessibility to the voters' list. less than half of the PUs visited in these LGAs were described as accessible to PWDs. By senatorial distribution, Ekiti central had the highest number of voters who are PWDs, compared with Ekiti North and South respectively.



While physical disability tops the chart with 27.09% of this number according to a Shelby Treat Report (2016), Deafness/Hearing Loss is the second largest form of disability in Nigeria⁵ with 23.76% estimated to have a form of hearing impairment⁶.

³The Premium Times newspaper quoting the Chairman of the National Population Commission on October 7, 2018: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/288954-19-million-nigerians-living-with-disability-official.html>
⁴World Bank, 2020. Disability Inclusion in Nigeria : A Rapid Assessment. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34073>
⁵Licence: CC BY 3.0 IGO." found on Open Knowledge website: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34073>
<https://independent.ng/international-week-of-the-deaf-how-nigerian-sign-language-interpreters-help-children-dispel-fear-of-coronavirus/>
⁶Treat (2016) reports, quoted by Asonye et al, 2018 'Deaf in Nigeria: A Preliminary Survey of Isolated Deaf Communities': https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326137878_Deaf_in_Nigeria_A_Preliminary_Survey_of_Isolated_Deaf_Communities: accessed 20/10/2022

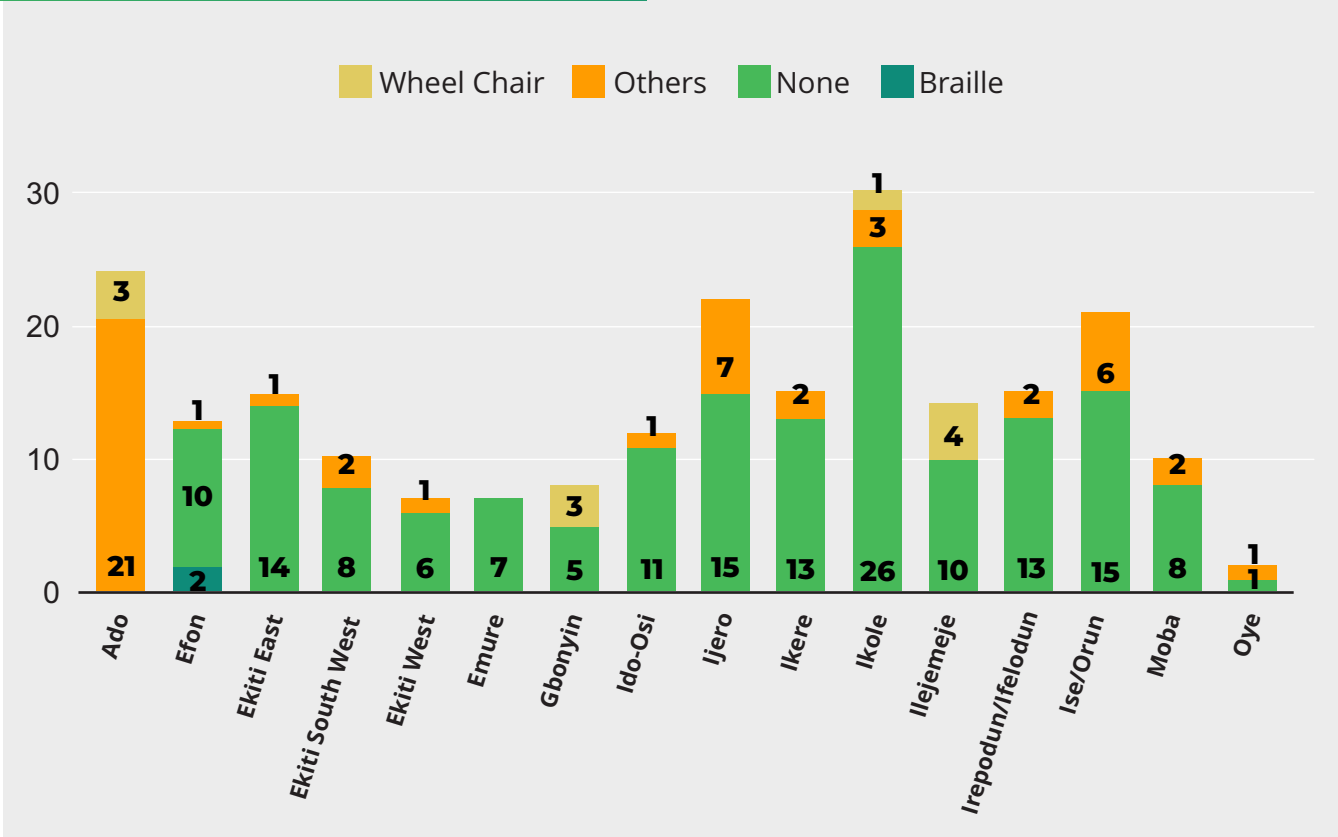
Observers on the field were tasked to report on INEC’s preparedness for different PWD groups, mainly focusing on the two largest classes of disability. It was observed that only about a quarter of observed PUs were reported to have ramps. None of the PUs visited in Ekiti SW, Emure, Gbonyin and Ise/Orun had ramps present in the vicinity where voting was taking place. Irepodun/Ifelodun had the best provision rate for ramps, with 66.7% of PU in the LGA having ramps, according to further research on data from Local Government Areas with at least 15 PUs visited by the observer. Ise/Orun had the worst provision rate with none of the 21 PU visited in the LGA having a ramp.



Additionally, Just 2 of the observed PUs were able to confirm the presence of a sign language interpreter from INEC. All two of the PUs were located in the same LGA, Ijero. About 1 in 5 PUs reported being uncertain about the presence of a sign language interpreter.

Additionally, less than a quarter (18.7%) of the observed PUs noted that assistive devices were provided for PWDs. None of these reported the presence of more than one assistive device. Considering LGAs where more than 10 PUs were observed, Ijero LGA was the best in making provisions for PWD. 31.82% of observed PUs in Ijero made provisions for PWD, and all of the devices were reported as other assistive devices outside wheelchairs and Braille. Emure was the only LGA that did not provide any type of assistive device for PWDs.

Assistive devices for PWDs



It was clear from monitoring that there were high levels of adherence to the rule of priority voting. Analysis of observer data shows that 13 in 20 of our observed PU had voters that required priority access to voting activities. All the PUs visited in Ido-Osi had voters that would need priority access. Very few of the PU in Ado LGA had voters who required priority access.

SECURITY



26,747

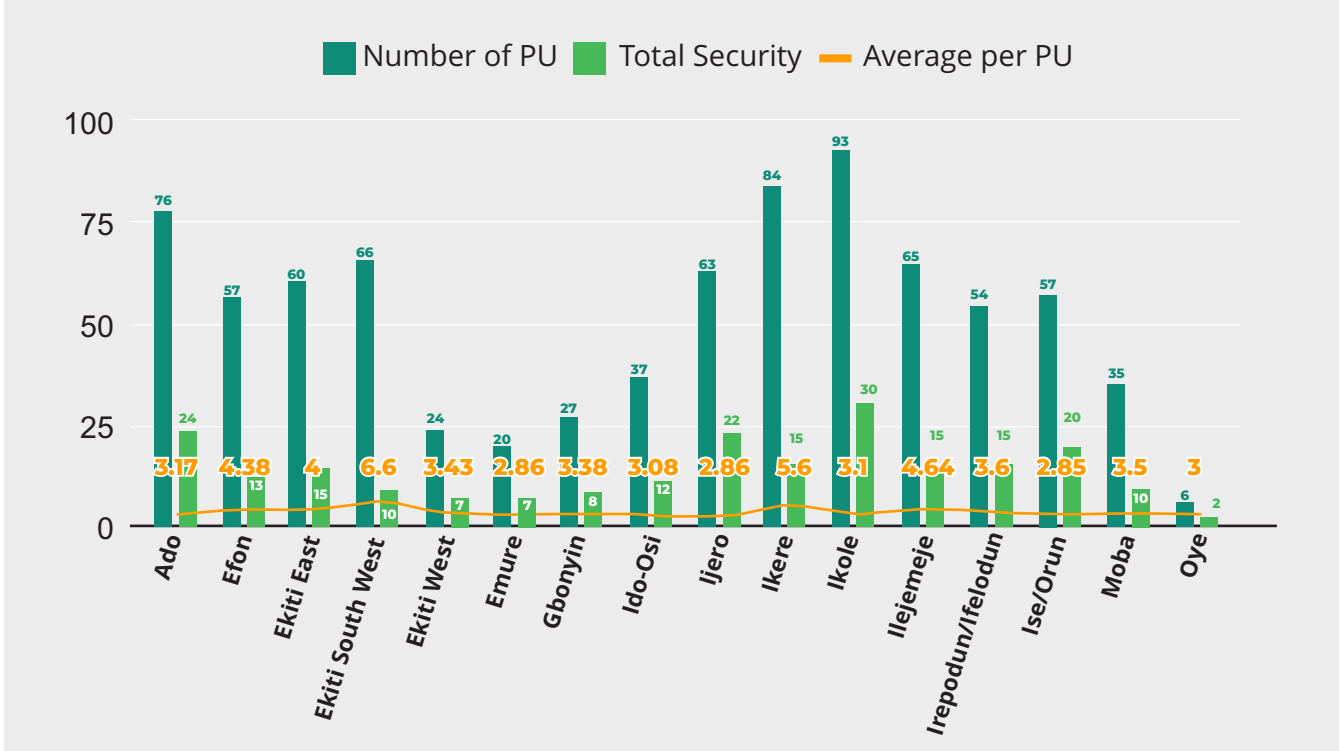
The Nigerian Police force and Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps jointly deployed a total of 26,747 security personnel to ensure the safe start of the Ekiti Gubernatorial election

The Nigerian Police force and Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps jointly deployed a total of 26,747 security personnel to ensure the safe start of the Ekiti Gubernatorial election. According to reports, the NSCDC deployed 9747 officers, while the NPF deployed approximately 17,000 personnel.

Our observers observed an average of four security personnel per PU visited. Ekiti SW appeared to be the most secure of all the LGAs from our sampled PUs, with the highest allocation of security personnel per PU. Emure and Ijero LGAs appeared to be the least secure, with an average of three security personnel per PU. Our observers observed that some PUs had up to ten security personnel attached.

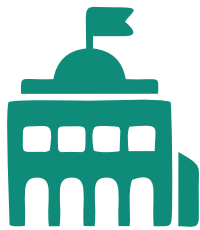


Security



4.44%

Only a tiny fraction (4.44%) of the PUs visited reported observing any form of a security breach.



Eight of the LGAs did not experience any form of a security breach. Ekiti SW had the most negative ratio for experiencing security breaches of all the LGAs, with **20%** of the PUs having security breaches.

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Eight of the LGAs did not experience any form of a security breach. Ekiti SW had the most negative ratio for experiencing security breaches of all the LGAs, with 20% of the PUs having security breaches. Most breaches in peace and security were recorded between security personnel and party agents in the polling units. It was observed that party agents were not listening to the officials and acted in a way contrary to INEC guidelines which led to arguments. It is interesting to note that there was no strong relationship found between the number of security personnel present at a PU and security breaches occurring.

Generally, there were very few incidents of harassment of observers by security personnel. However, the harassment of observers was experienced at two of the 225 polling units visited. One of our observers reported that heavily armed policemen attempted to arrest him, and seized his phone before demanding a licence to use a private phone for official media coverage. This goes against the official observer guideline of INEC which empowers observers to make records and carry out their duties as long as it does not disrupt the elections⁷.

This shows that more needs to be done to improve the capacity of party agents and security officers to abide by the prescribed laws during elections and go about their duties in a way that respects the rights and roles of other stakeholders.

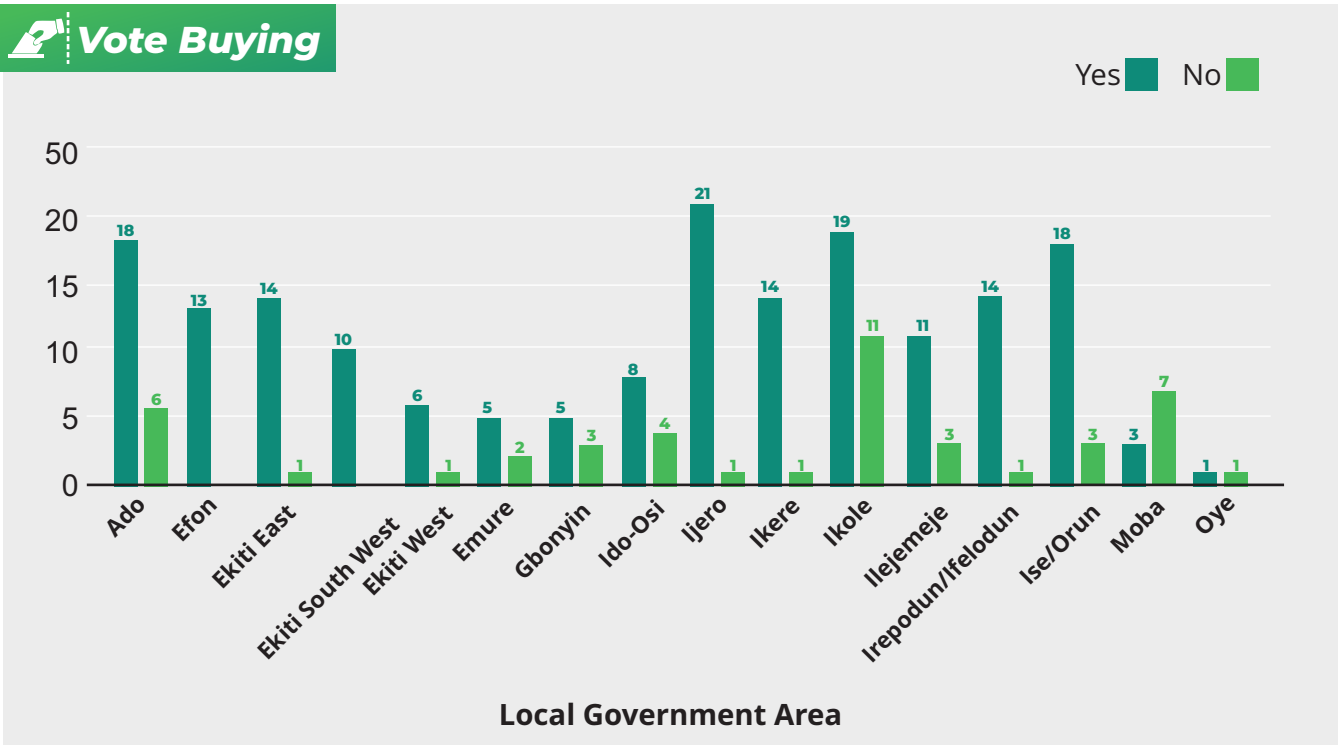
⁷<https://www.inecnigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/INEC-guidelines-for-election-observation.pdf>

VOTE BUYING



Despite the high level of deployment of security officials during the elections, **45 incidences** of vote trading were still reported by observers.

Despite the high level of deployment of security officials during the elections, 45 incidences of vote trading were still reported by observers. Vote buying was reported in 2 out of every 10 PUs visited. Of the LGAs with at least 10 PUs visited, Moba had the highest rate with 7 of the 10 PUs experiencing vote buying. Efon and Ekiti SW were the only LGAs which had reports to the contrary; of observers not being aware of vote buying taking place. This we can attribute to the clandestine methods of vote buying being used by political parties. It was also observed that votes were sold for at low as 5k and none exceeding 10k. Some other voters sold their votes for provisions like salt, beverages and spaghetti. These amounts remain similar to the prices of votes recorded in 2018.



While vote buying is not alien to some advanced democracies, Nigeria needs to step up the game by putting heavy penalties on vote buying or selling. The adverse effects of vote buying on democracy such as lack of accountability of the parts of elected officials, undermining political legitimacy and more.

⁶Cletus Famous Nwankwo, 2018 "Vote Buying in the 2018 Governorship Election in Ekiti State, Nigeria" accessed 22/10/2022 file:///C:/Users/HP/Downloads/10.1515_openps-2018-0005%20(1).pdf

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This report despite its limited scope has proffered analysis on gender, inclusion security and vote buying during the 2022 Ekiti Gubernatorial Elections. The equal distribution of gender amongst polling unit officers along with the observed level of female voters representation is a positive feature which bodes well for our electoral system, or at least points out that our system in many respects is moving in a good direction.

The accessibility of polling units and provisions for PWDs requires better organisation from the data produced in this report. Additionally, more attention should be paid to vote buying as it mars the gains made by Nigeria's democracy

This report propounds the following recommendations from its findings:

- ✎ INEC and other stakeholders should endeavour to carry out dialogues and capacity-building exercises for security officials and party agents. This would help them understand the rules governing elections.
- ✎ The National Assembly, INEC and other stakeholders should work together to create the Electoral Offences Commission. This would help reduce the workload on INEC and help focus on bringing offenders who carry out vote trading to book.
- ✎ Joint continuous voters education needs to be encouraged between the National Orientation Agency (NOA) and the Electoral Management Body (EMB)
- ✎ Since, observers and media are critical to the electoral process, security personnel on election duty need to be educated on the contributions of observers to democracy. This will allow seamless smooth observation and reporting.

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