



Preliminary Statement on the Conduct of 2015 Nigeria Presidential and National Assembly Elections

Saturday March 28th 2015

About CLEEN Foundation

CLEEN Foundation is a nongovernmental organisation established in 1998 and registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) in Nigeria to promote public safety, security and Justice. These priorities are pursued through the strategies of empirical research, legislative advocacy, demonstration programmes and publications in partnership with government and civil society.

Since 2003, the CLEEN Foundation has been observing the conduct of security personnel on election duty. In this role, CLEEN Foundation collaborates with the Police Service Commission, the civilian oversight agency of the police, responsible for the appointment, promotion and discipline of police officers in Nigeria.

Background

As in every election since 2003, CLEEN Foundation deployed observers during the Presidential and National Assembly elections held on Saturday 28th March, 2015. With support from Justice for All (J4A) Program of UK Department for International Development (DFID), CLEEN Foundation recruited, trained and mobilised a team of five hundred and twelve election observers to observe the conduct of security personnel in order to measure their effectiveness and adherence to the benchmark of acceptable behaviour. Furthermore, the Foundation printed and circulated posters and flyers of the abridged version of the Police Service Commission's Guidelines for the Conduct of Security Personnel on Election Duty with the aim of enlightening the police and the general public in this important exercise of ensuring effective and accountable policing during elections. This information, education and communication materials provided the public with hot-lines for complaints, report and commendation on the general conduct of the security personnel and the election proceedings in general. This interim report presents our findings during the just concluded presidential and national assembly elections in Nigeria.

Methodology

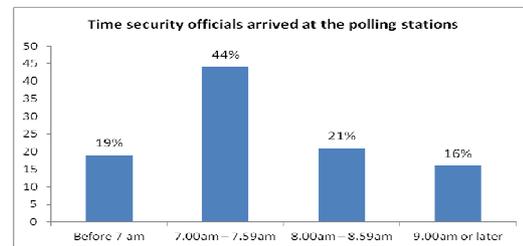
The observers recorded their observation using a checklist containing several indicators pertaining to punctuality, impartiality, fairness, responsiveness and professionalism of security personnel at the polling stations. Observers also recorded incidence of misconduct

and exceptional good behaviour of officials. CLEEN Foundation deployed observers in all states of the federation including officers from the Police Service Commission.

Observation

a) Punctuality and adequacy of officers

We observed appreciable presence of personnel at the polling stations. 83% of the polling units had two or more security personnel. Significant majority of these personnel arrived promptly at their duty post: 63% arrived at the polling station before 8am and 21% between 8am and 9am. However, 16% arrived after 9am. Most (71%) security personnel remain at their polling unit till the end of the exercise. Those who left (29%) for a short period during the poll were reported to have done so in order to eat or ease themselves.

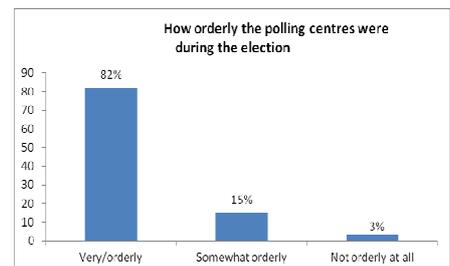
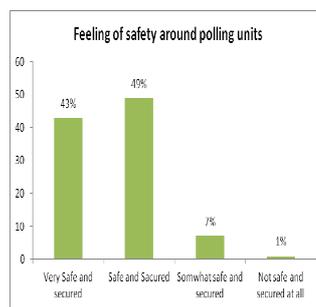


b) Civility and impartiality of officers

In majority of the polling units (52%) observers reported that the security personnel were very approachable and were described as approachable in another 42% of the units. Only in 6% were the security personnel described as somewhat approachable. Generally, officers were rated as impartial in carrying out their duties. Observers rated personnel as very impartial (33%) and impartial (53%). However, they were rated as partial in 10% of the polling unit observed.

c) Orderliness and feeling of safety at the polling units

Most polling units were observed to be orderly (82%) followed by somewhat orderly in 15% and not orderly in 3% of the locations. This is corroborated by the observation that 92% felt safe at the polling. In 96% of the polling unit, security personnel followed the instruction of the presiding officer. Further, in 91% of cases there were no threats to security at the centre.

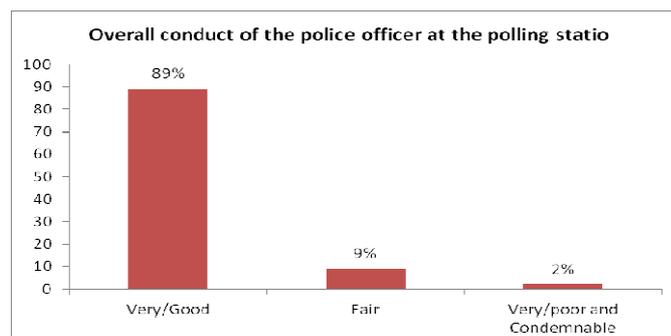


d) Use of Force

It is an appreciable improvement in the conduct of the security that force was used in only 5% of the polling unit. 95% of the polling units recorded no use of force. Where force was used, it was considered necessary in 63% of the cases and not necessary at all in 12%. Further, the force used was considered proportionate in 79% of the cases and excessive in 4% of the cases.

e) Overall Assessment of Officer

The behavior of security personnel at the polling unit was good (89%) and fair 9%. Only in 2% of the polling unit was the conduct of personnel described as poor and condemnable.



Highlights of insecurity and misconducts at Polling Units

In spite of satisfactory conduct of security personnel, cases of insecurity and misconduct were observed in some polling units, some of which are highlighted below:

- General perception of insecurity within the environment influenced the atmosphere in which the election was conducted in many places. Civil unrest in Takum LGA in Taraba State; an attack in Nafada LGA Gombe State where several voters were shot; Boko Haram attack in Miringa town of Biu Local Government Area, Borno state posed challenges for the elections.
- Late arrival of INEC officials, delayed accreditation and malfunction of card readers posed security challenges in many polling units.
- Inducement of voters at polling stations were observed
- Highly populated polling units created challenges for crowd control especially in high density urban areas.
- There were isolated cases of mishandling of journalists and voters and resort to the use of tear gas in crowd control by security personnel. An instance of this is the mishandling of a Channels TV crew in Calabar, Cross Rivers State.
- Insecurity of ad hoc staff, particularly Youth Corp members

Recommendations

In the light of the foregoing observations, the following measures are recommended:

1. Logistics arrangement that would enable prompt commencement and effective administration of voting at polling units should be improved. Specifically:
 - a) Effective arrangement for transportation of officials and materials to polling units
 - b) Effective arrangement for the transportation of security personnel to polling units
 - c) Effective response to malfunctioning polling devices, shortages of materials, power outage and other contingent facilities
 - d) Effective arrangement be made for the welfare and convenience of polling and security officials
 - e) Effective protection of ad hoc staff, particularly Youth Corp members during and immediately after elections
2. Establishment of additional polling units to reduce voters crowd and enhance voting processes and effective policing of elections

3. Continuous improvement in technology driven electoral process by the country
4. Integration of election security curriculum into the trainings of the Nigeria security personnel
5. Sustain the monitoring of the conduct of security officials on election duty as mechanism for improved professionalism.

For further information please contact:

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