



Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO)

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PRELIMINARY REPORT (1) ON THE ON-GOING BIOMETRIC VOTER REGISTRATION EXERCISE BY THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) deployed 100 observers for the on-going Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) Exercise being carried out by the Electoral Commission of Ghana (EC) across the country. CODEO has an observer each in 100 randomly and purposively selected constituencies spread across the 16 regions of the country. During Phase One of the registration exercise (June 30-July 5) which just ended, each observer followed one EC registration team and observed the process at one registration center throughout the six days. Observers filed daily observation reports to the CODEO Secretariat in Accra. In addition to the 100 stationery observers, CODEO also had a few roaming observers in the Greater Accra region who observed the registration exercise at some centers in the national capital. In assessing the conduct of the exercise, all CODEO observers are required to observe and report on some key indicators such as the location of registration centers, availability of registration materials, availability and functioning of BVR kits, conduct of registration officials and other stakeholders such as political party agents and registration applicants, and adherence to registration rules and regulations. Observers are also to watch the extent of adherence to COVID-19 health and safety protocols including those instituted by the EC at registration centers.

At the end of Phase One of the registration exercise, the CODEO Secretariat received a total of 575 daily observation reports from 100 constituencies from the 30th of June to July 5, 2020. Below are highlights of CODEO's preliminary findings from the analyses of the daily reports received from observers.

Findings

Opening and Set-Up of Registration Centers.

- Majority of registration centers observed were able to start daily registration on time, but others could not. In majority of cases (66%), registration started by 7:15am. In other instances, registration started between 7:16am-8:00am (28%), or after 8:00am (5%).
- Nearly all (99%) of the registration centers observed were easy to locate. However, one in 10 of registration centers (11%) were found by observers to be not easily accessible to persons with disabilities and the elderly.
- About 95% of registration centers were set up in a manner that allowed for the easy flow of registrants from entry to exit, but 5% were not.
- About 68% of registration centers observed had a team of six or more registration officials. Close to 32% of centers had less than 6 registration officials.
- About 79% of registration centers had stationed uniformed security personnel.

Availability of Registration Devices and Materials

- Nearly all registration centers had on a daily basis, a Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) Kit and the requisite registration materials or forms such as the Voter Registration Form, Guarantee Forms, Challenge Forms at the time registration started. Most (99%) registration centers observed did not encounter any shortage of registration materials but close to 1% of centers encountered some shortage of materials.

Presence of Party Agents/Transparency of the Registration Process

- All registration centers observed had both NDC and the NPP agents. Most registration centers (87%) did not have any other political party agent apart from those of the NDC and the NPP. Very few of the registration centers observed had agents from the CPP (6%), PNC (5%), PPP (3%) and other political parties (6%).

Observation of COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols

- Observers reported that in some instances (28%), registration officials could not ensure that there was a two-meter distance between registration applicants in queue. Observers reported instances of overcrowding of people outside of the inner perimeters of registration centers. This is in spite of the fact that most registration centers (91%) were found by observers to be spacious enough to allow for the necessary social distancing arrangement. However, about 9% of the registration centers observed lacked the required space to enforce the relevant social distancing protocols for registration applicants.
- Observers indicated that in most cases (92%), registration officials checked the temperature of registration applicants before they were admitted into registration centers. However, this was not done in some cases (8%). In few instances, some applicants were turned away from a registration center by officials because of their high body temperature.
- In nearly all instances (99%), registration centers had hand-washing facilities (soap and buckets with water) mounted and available. Hand-washing was strictly enforced by registration officials in most cases (82%). In 18% of the time however, handwashing was not strictly enforced. Observers also indicated that in a few cases (4%), there was shortage of some of the hand-washing facilities at some point in the registration exercise.
- Registration officials did not always wipe or clean the surface of the fingerprint scanners after applicants used them. Observers indicated that officials “always” did so only in 4 in 10 (43%) cases, and “often” or “sometimes” in majority (55%) of cases. At a few instances (2%), the officials ‘never’ wiped or cleaned the surface of the fingerprint scanners after applicants used them.

Performance of Biometric Voter Registration Kits

- Biometric Voter Registration kits encountered some form of malfunction in a few instances (13%). In most cases (87%), no equipment malfunction occurred. Equipment malfunction included unresponsive devices, logging-in difficulties, challenges with capturing fingerprints of applicants and malfunctioning cameras. Observers indicated that in most instances, these challenges were either fixed or the malfunctioning device got replaced. The reports from observers showed that in some cases (8%), malfunctioning BVR kits caused a suspension or delay in the registration process. For example, at the Methodist Primary School No. 2 Danfa registration center in Madina in the Greater Accra region, there was about a two-hour delay to the exercise on Day 1 due to a battery problem, causing the center to close earlier than expected.

The Registration Process

- There were some reported incidents of confusion in some cases (10%) and a few reported instances of violence.
- Observer reports indicated that in a few cases (4%), there was an attempt by someone to physically prevent an applicant from registering instead of filling a challenge form.
- Observers further reported that in some instances (28%), there were people who had stationed themselves around registration centers looking out to guarantee for registration applicants. Observers indicated that some of these people had been brought in and around the registration centers by political party agents so they could guarantee for others.
- In most (96%) cases, observers said the registration exercise was conducted according to the electoral rules and regulations. In 4% of the time, the rules and regulations were violated.
- In majority of cases (60%), registration officials were able to register 100 or more persons a day (sometimes up to 177 registered persons a day). In 21% of cases however, registration officials could register less than 80 persons a day.
- At the end of the first phase (i.e. 6 days) of the registration exercise, over 71% of registration centers had registered 500 or more people. About 24% of centers had registered 700 or more people. About 29% of centers also registered less than 500 at the end of the phase.

Some Reported Incidents

Observers reported of a number of incidents that occurred at some registration centers at some points in time during registration. These included crowding at some registration centers, incidence of violence, incidence of rainfall disrupting the registration process, attempted registration by alleged foreigners, attempted registration by people suspected to be from outside an electoral area, and political party leaders/executives trooping in to registration centers.

Some of these incidents are highlighted below.

- In the afternoon of July 4, 2020, there was a confrontation at a registration center at the Sakasaka Polling Station in Tamale when a political party activist allegedly attempted to get some people from outside the electoral area to register. In the process, the alleged party activist smashed the phones of the Registration Officer and that of a party agent from a different political party. The timely intervention by police officers and local party leaders brought the situation under control as tempers had flared up.
- Observers reported of a number of instances where political party executives/leaders kept trooping in and out of registration centers. In one instance on June 30, 2020 at a registration center at the R/C JHS School 'A', Elubo in the Jomoro Constituency of the Western Region, the situation nearly resulted in a physical fight when some registration applicants challenged the “unauthorized” presence of party leaders. The intervention of security personnel brought the situation under control.
- Observers report that at some registration centers, political party agents have been taking down the registration details of registration applicants and the situation resulted in some

confrontations at one center in the Akatsi North constituency (EP JHS, Dzalele registration center). At this center, a registered voter and a party agent got into a nearly physical confrontation on July 1, 2020 when the former challenged the collection of his voter ID card information by political party agents. The situation resulted in the halting of the registration process for some minutes. In another instance at the same center on June 30, 2020, there was a near brawl between NDC and NPP party agents when the MP for the area urged registration applicants not to give out information on their voter ID cards to political party agents.

- At the registration center at the District Magistrate Court in Pokuase in the Amasaman constituency, a suspected foreigner was arrested by security officers for attempting to register after interrogation by the registration officer. One person who tried to guarantee for the alleged foreigner was also arrested.

Conclusions

- CODEO is worried that there is some level of laxity in the respect for the COVID-19 health and safety protocols, particularly the lack of social distancing at some registration centers observed. Accordingly, CODEO calls on the Electoral Commission to consider additional mechanisms for enhancing the effectiveness of the respect for health and safety protocols at all registration centers at all times.
- The EC must intensify public awareness about the movement plan of registration teams to enhance public awareness and understanding about the mode of the registration exercise so that people do not continue to gather at registration centers when they do not have to do so.
- CODEO observers reported of changes to the movement plans in various parts of the country. CODEO entreats the EC to keep the public adequately informed of all such changes to the movement plan so that eligible persons can adequately prepare to take part in the subsequent phases of the exercise.
- The practice of party agents collecting voter information on newly-issued voter ID cards after a person has registered should stop as there are other mechanisms for political parties to collect information about the registration process.
- While the security personnel have been able to bring a number of violent and chaotic situations under control, CODEO entreats the Police Service to swiftly prosecute any persons who violate the electoral laws to serve as an early deterrent to others.
- CODEO urges the general public to exercise optimum responsibility in ensuring that human lives are not endangered unnecessarily.

CODEO will continue to observe the remaining phases of the exercise and keep the public informed about the conduct of the exercise. CODEO's 2020 BVR observation exercise is kindly supported by the STAR-Ghana Foundation.

Signed:
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National Coordinator

**APPENDIX: LIST OF REGISTRATION CENTERS OBSERVED BY CODEO
STATIONED OBSERVERS IN PHASE ONE OF THE REGISTRATION EXERCISE**

S/N	Region	District	Constituency	Polling Station
1.	Western	Jomoro	Jomoro	R/C JHS Sch. Block 'A' Elubo
2.	Western	Sekondi/Takoradi	Takoradi	Secondi Taxi Rank, Takoradi
3.	Western	Effia-Kwesimintsim Sub	Effia Kwesimintim	Cath Parish Hall(West End)
4.	Western	Mpohor	Mpohor	Methodist Primary, Mpohor (1)
5.	Western	Prestea Huni-Valley	Prestea Huni-Valley	M/A Primary School,Mfantsekrom
6.	Western	Wassa Amenfi West	Amenfi West	Low Cost, Asankragwa
7.	Central	Mfantseman	Mfantseman	Anglican Church, Mankessim
8.	Central	Ajumako-Enyan-Esiam	Ajumako Enyan Esiam	SCMB Cocoa Shed, Anyinasu
9.	Central	Awutu Senya West	Awutu Senya West	Durbar Groundsm, Tayano Awutu
10.	Central	Awutu Senya East	Awutu Senya East	Anglican Pry Sch, Akweley
11.	Central	Asikuma Odoben Brakwa	Asikuma/Odoben/Brakwa	Meth JHS Sch, Odoben
12.	Central	Twifo Atti Morkwa	Twifo Atti Morkwa	Cath Primary School, Moseaso
13.	Central	Upper Denkyira East	Upper Denkyira East	Temporal Booth, Dunkwa
14.	Greater Accra	Weija / Gbawe	Weija / Gbawe	Presbyterian Church, New Jerusalem, Gicel
15.	Greater Accra	Ga-West	Amasaman	Dist. Magistrate Court, Pokuase
16.	Greater Accra	La - Nkwantanang / Madina	Madina	Methodist Primary School No.2 Danfa
17.	Greater Accra	Ayawaso West	Ayawaso West Wuogon	Clinic West Legon
18.	Greater Accra	Accra	Okaikwei South	Accra Academy (1)
19.	Greater Accra	Ablekuma Central	Ablekuma Central	Police Church Police Barracks Odorkor (2)
20.	Greater Accra	Korle Klottey	Korle Klottey	St Barnabas Anglican Prim Sch
21.	Greater Accra	Krowor	Krowor	Anglican Prim Sch Nungua (1)
22.	Greater Accra	Ningo-Prampram	Ningo Prampram	Anglican JHS Prampram No. 1
23.	Greater Accra	Ada West	Sege	The Apostolic Church Ghana
24.	Greater Accra	Ada East	Ada	JHS Gorm
25.	Volta	Ketu South	Ketu South	T.B Market Square
26.	Volta	Akatsi North	Akatsi North	EP JHS, Dzalele
27.	Volta	Central Tongu	Central Tongu	District Assembly Hall, Adidome
28.	Volta	North Tongu	North Tongu	R.C Prim Sch.Aveyime
29.	Volta	Adaklu	Adaklu	E P Prim Sch Adaklu-Kpatove
30.	Volta	Ho Municipal	Ho Central	District Education Office Ho
31.	Volta	Ho West	Ho West	E P Lower Prim Anfoeta-Sreme
32.	Volta	Afadjato South	Afadjato South	E P Prim Sch Koloenu
33.	Eastern	Lower Manya Krobo	Lower Manya Krobo	Presby Prim Sch, Kpong
34.	Eastern	Suhum	Suhum	Suhum Sec / Tech No. 2
35.	Eastern	Upper West Akim	Upper West Akim	Methodist Primary School Adeiso
36.	Eastern	Birim Central	Akim Oda	Durbar Ground - Aboabo
37.	Eastern	Achiase	Achiase	L/A J.H.S Anamase
38.	Eastern	Akyemansa	Ofoase/Ayirebi	Market Square - Abease
39.	Eastern	Abuakwa South	Abuakwa South	M/A Experimental Sch. Kibi

40.	Eastern	Abuakwa North	Abuakwa North	Mid Tafo Presby. J.H.S. New Tafo
41.	Eastern	Kwahu West	Nkawkaw	Unity Gardens Nkawkaw No. 1
42.	Eastern	Kwahu-South	Mpraeso	Funeral Grounds Atibie
43.	Eastern	Afram Plains South	Afram Plains South	St James Academy Mamekrobo East
44.	Ashanti	Adansi South	New Edubiase	D/A Prim Sch Kojo Mankrong
45.	Ashanti	Adansi Asokwa	Adansi Asokwa	D/A JHS '1' Asokwa
46.	Ashanti	Obuasi Municipal	Obuasi West	Chief Palace Kunka No.2
47.	Ashanti	Atwima Nwabiagya North	Atwima Nwabiagya North	R/C Prim Essaso No. 2
48.	Ashanti	Bosomtwe	Bosomtwe	Akokofe R/C Prim School
49.	Ashanti	Kwadaso	Kwadwoso	Pentecost Church Kwadaso
50.	Ashanti	Oforikrom	Oforikrom	Ghana National Academy No. 1
51.	Ashanti	Suame	Suame	SUAME POLICE STATION
52.	Ashanti	Asokore Mampong	Asawase	Mamponghene's Area Akwatialine 1
53.	Ashanti	Kwabre East	Kwabre East	Nana Darko'S House Anyinam
54.	Ashanti	Afigya Kwabre South	Afigya Kwabre South	Methodist Prim School Kodie
55.	Ashanti	Sekyere Afram Plains	Sekyere Afram Plains	SDA JHS, Anyinofi
56.	Ashanti	Sekyere Central	Nsuta/Kwamang/Beposo	D/A Prim. Sch, Bonkrong
57.	Ashanti	Ejura Sekyedumase	Ejura Sekyedumase	Ejura Community Centre[A1]
58.	Ashanti	Sekyere South	Afigya Sekyere East	Kona CMB Shed
59.	Ashanti	Ahafo Ano North	Ahafo Ano North	Anglican Prim Sch Tapa No. 1
60.	Western North	Bodi	Bodi	Cocoa Shed Odumtankwa
61.	Western North	Bia West District	Bia West	Information Center- Elluokrom
62.	Western North	Bia East	Bia East	R.C Primary School Adabokrom
63.	Ahafo	Asutifi North	Asutifi North	G C M B Shed Kenyasi No 1
64.	Ahafo	Tano South	Tano South	Community J S S New Bronsankro
65.	Bono	Dormaa Central	Dormaa Central	C M B Shed Dormaa Ahenkro
66.	Bono	Berekum East	Berekum East	Presbyterian Primary School, Kato
67.	Bono	Jaman South	Jaman South	Bonna JHS,Drobo
68.	Bono	Jaman North	Jaman North	Presby JHS, Suma Ahenkro
69.	Bono	Banda	Banda	Presby Prim Sch Banda-Ahenkro
70.	Bono	Tain	Tain	DA Prim.Sch Attakrom
71.	Bono East	Techiman	Techiman	Presby Junior High Sch Techiman
72.	Bono East	Nkoranza North	Nkoranza North	District Health Directorate Busunya
73.	Bono East	Nkoranza South	Nkoranza South	Eng/Arabic Sch A Kissiman
74.	Bono East	Sene West	Sene West	D/A Prim Sch (Kalipo) Kwame Danso
75.	Oti	Jasikan	Buem	E P Primary School Jasikan
76.	Oti	Krachi-Nchumuru	Krachi-Nchumuru	D/A Prim Sch Zongo Macheri
77.	Northern	Yendi	Yendi	Old District Council
78.	Northern	Saboba	Saboba	T/B Ptim Sch Sobiba
79.	Northern	Savelugu Municipal	Savelugu	Yarabilni (1)
80.	Northern	Nanton	Nanton	Temp Booth Boglini Mosque-Nanton
81.	Northern	Tamale Metropolis	Tamale	SAKASAKA POLICE STATION
82.	Northern	Kumbungu	Kumbungu	Market Stall Kumbungu
83.	Savannah	Bole	Bole/Bamboi	Zongo No. 2
84.	Savannah	Sawla/Tuna/Kalba	Sawla Tuna Kalba	P W D Yard Sawla

85.	Savannah	North East Gonja	Salaga North	E/A Prim Sch Kpalbe
86.	Upper West	Wa East	Wa East	Halemboi Kindergarten
87.	Upper West	Nadowli/Kaleo	Nadowli/Kaleo	Nadowli L/ A Prim Sch
88.	Upper West	Jirapa Municipal	Jirapa	Jirapa Local Council
89.	Upper West	Nandom	Nandom	Nandom Local Council
90.	Upper West	Sissala West	Sissala West	Silbelle Primary Sch
91.	Upper West	Sissala East	Sissala East	Tumu Sec Tech
92.	North East	Bunkpurugu/Nakpanduri	Bunkpurugu	Catholic Church Bunkpurugu
93.	North East	Yunyoo/Nasuan	Yunyoo	L A Prim School Nasuan
94.	Upper East	Builsa North	Builsa North	Siniensi Jhs
95.	Upper East	Kassena/Nankana West	Kassena/Nankana West	Kakugu/Post Office
96.	Upper East	Bolgatanga	Bolgatanga Central	Post Office Yard
97.	Upper East	Bongo	Bongo	Namoo Prim School A
98.	Upper East	Talensi	Talensi	Tongo Community Centre
99.	Upper East	Bawku	Bawku	Daduri Jnr High Sch.
100.	Upper East	Binduri	Binduri	Benguri Prim. Sch