



POLLING DAY OBSERVATION: SITUATIONAL REPORT

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Introduction

The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) on Sunday, December 6, 2020, communicated to the nation its intention to again employ the Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) methodology to observe the 2020 presidential and parliamentary elections. In fulfillment of this intention, CODEO has deployed a total of 4,000 trained, accredited, non-partisan Rapid Response Observers (RROs), stationed in 4,000 randomly selected nationally representative sampled polling stations. These observers are Ghanaians from every walk of life who have volunteered their time to ensure that registered voters cast their ballots freely and unhindered on Election Day. Of the 4,000, 1,502 are Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) observers.

This mid-day situational statement is based on reports regarding the set-up, the opening of polling stations, and few incidences received from **1,499** out of the **1,502** PVT Observers (i.e., **99.8%**) located in all 275 constituencies in the 16 regions of the country as of **1:00 PM today** (i.e., Election Day).

Arrival at Polling Stations

- Upon arrival, CODEO Observers (**87.2%**) met election officials present at their assigned polling stations. However, in **12.8%** of polling stations, CODEO Observers did not see elections officials when they arrived. It is worthy to note that by rule, CODEO observers are expected to arrive at their polling stations by 6:00 AM. Therefore, not seeing election officials upon arrival does not connote lateness on the part of election officials.
- Most of the polling stations (**72.5%**) had the required number of election officials (6). Another **18.6%** had 5 officials, **5.9%** had 4 officials, and **2.3%** had 1 to 3 officials.
- In **98.2%** of polling stations where CODEO Observers are located, electoral officials respected their status as Electoral Commission's (EC's) accredited election observers and permitted them to observe the polls. CODEO can confirm that a few of its observers are experiencing network challenges and have not been able to send in their information. This accounts for the shortfall in the number of observers indicating they were permitted to observe.

Set-up for Polls

- CODEO Observers indicated that **91.8%** of polling stations were set-up to allow voters to mark their ballots in secret. They also reported that **94.4%** of all polling stations were accessible to persons with disabilities and the elderly.
- At the time of set-up, CODEO Observers reported seeing polling agents of the two main political parties present in almost all polling stations (NPP, **99.6%**; NDC, **99.1%**). In **50%** of the polling stations, none of the agents of the other parties and independent candidates were present.
- CODEO Observers' reports showed that **92.6%** of the polling stations had the sensitive materials available (i.e., the ballot box, ballot papers, indelible ink, voting screen, validating stamp, ink pad, endorsing ink, and tactile ballot papers). However, **6%** of the polling stations were missing tactile ballot papers.
- In almost all the polling stations (**99.6%**), CODEO observers reported that ballot booklets had serial numbers in numeric order.
- CODEO Observers could confirm that in all polling stations (**99.6%**), the presidential and parliamentary ballot boxes were shown to be empty, sealed, and placed in public view before the commencement of voting.
- CODEO observers reported seeing stationed, roaming, or roaming and stationed security personnel at **85.3%** of polling stations. Only **14.7%** of polling stations were reported to be without security personnel.
- The Police topped the list of security officials deployed for the election (**60%**) followed by Uniformed Personnel from other security services (**24%**), the Ghana Armed Forces (**6%**), and National Security (**3%**).
- CODEO observers' reports showed that security personnel were unarmed in **62.1%** of polling stations. Nearly a quarter of the polling stations (**23.2%**) had armed security personnel.
- According to CODEO observers, **1%** of polling stations had 3 biometric devices. In **84%**, there were 2 biometric devices, **14%** had one device, and **1%** had none.
- Reports from CODEO Observers showed that voting generally commenced on time. By 7:15 AM, over half of the polling stations (**65.5%**) had opened. Another **29.0%** opened between 7:16AM and 8:00AM adding up to **94.5%** opening by 8:00AM. The rest opened (**5.5%**) opened after 8:00 AM.
- CODEO observers found COVID-19 safety materials available at most polling stations (i.e., thermometer gun, **95%**; handwashing facility (soap & water), **94%**; hand sanitizer, **93%**; and scanner wipes, **78%**). Less than **1%** of polling stations lacked these protocols.

Reported incidents

So far, a number of CODEO Observers have reported some incidents relating to the process. Some of these incidents include non-compliance with COVID-19 protocols, harassment of some voters and poll officials, and non-functioning Biometric Verification Devices (BVDs). In addition, at the Manguam Polling Station in the Lower Manya Krobo Constituency in the Eastern Region, supporters of the NPP and NDC were hanging around the polling station after voting trying to convince voters to vote for their party. Further, unofficial members were being allowed into the cordoned area to speak with EC officials, which halted the voting process for about 5-10 minutes.

Apart from incidents submitted by CODEO observers, CODEO has taken steps to verify other incidents reported by our fact checking collaborators (i.e. DUBAWA, Ghana Fact Check, Penplusbytes and the Media Foundation for West Africa). Such incidents include the issuance of ballot papers with some candidates missing (this was confirmed in one polling in Awutu Twini in the Awutu Senya West Constituency and the Alhaji Salam Grinding Mill polling station at Bawku Central in the Upper East).

#Ghana2020elections



07/12/2020

CLAIM



COMING IN!! Residents of Whindo block road to prevent Election materials from entering the community, over poor state of the road.

Source: Facebook Page, @connect971fm



VERDICT

This has been confirmed by a CODEO constituency supervisor at Kwesimintsim to be true. A Starr FM report confirmed that the group action in protest against the poor nature of their roads. However, the issue has been resolved; the roadblocks have been taken off by the security personnel and voting has commenced.

To read more on this go to ghana.dubawa.org



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Conclusion

From the foregoing, CODEO in this preliminary situational report can confidently confirm that the arrangements put in place by the EC for the setup and opening of polls were adequate for most polling stations.

CODEO is continuing to receive reports from its network of nationally deployed observers and will continue to release updated reports.

Finally, CODEO appeals to all Ghanaians to remain calm and be law-abiding throughout the country and continue to respect the COVID-19 safety protocols.

SIGNED:

(For and on Behalf of the Advisory Board)
CODEO Secretariat, Monday, December 7, 2020