



**STATE INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL
COMMISSION**
(SIECOM) KADUNA

GUIDELINES FOR
ELECTION OBSERVATION
PROFILE/BASIC INFORMATION OF KADUNA STATE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS
GENERAL ELECTIONS

FOREWORD

The Kaduna State Independent Electoral Commission (SIECOM) believes that the acceptability of any electoral process can only be achieved through free, fair, credible and transparent conduct of election.

The role played by Non Governmental Organizations and Groups (both Domestic and International) as election Observers cannot be overemphasized. This is why SIECOM heartily welcomes Election Observers who are expected to carry out their duties faithfully and in strict compliance and conformity with the rules and regulations contained in this Guidelines.

SIECOM has made elaborate preparations to ensure that the forthcoming Local Government Council General Elections scheduled are credible and transparent. This includes ensuring that all electoral officials are persons of good character who will be given adequate training to carry out the enormous task ahead.

SIECOM will encourage Observers to verify the success and limitations of these arrangements. It is pertinent to point out at this juncture that the function of an "Observer" is distinct from that of a "Monitor". Only SIECOM and its duly authorized personnel are empowered to monitor elections and to that extent exercise some level of lawful authority over the conduct of elections as well as other officials involved. An Observer has no such power.

Proper arrangements have been made for efficient accreditation of both Domestic and International Observers as well as journalist to ease their movement around the State and voting centres before, during and after the elections.

Finally, as Observer, I implore you to be professional and objective in observing and reporting the election. Care must be taken in the use of language and your report must be a product of careful assessment of the entire process. Unconfirmed or unproven allegations should be avoided and the report should be structured in a logical manner.

On behalf of the entire staff of SIECOM, I welcome you and invite you to enjoy the coverage of the Local Government Elections in Kaduna state.

**PROFILE/BASIC INFORMATION OF KADUNA
STATE**

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LOCATION: The State lies between Latitude 09° 02'N 11.0 32'N and between Longitudes 06° 15'E and 08° 60'E 06°

POPULATION: 6,113,503 (2006)

AREA: 45,567 Square Kilometers

Number of Farming Facilities: 577,511 Approx.

Number of Primary Schools: 3,480

Number of Higher Institutions: Federal 7, State 5
Total 12

Number of Local governments: 23

Development Areas: 46

Number of Emirates: 3

Number of Chiefdoms: 32

Number of Districts: 345

Number of Electoral Wards: 255

Number of Polling Stations: 5,108

Main Ethnic Groups: Hausa, Fulani, Gbagyi, Bajju, Atyap, Jaba, Koro, Kanninkon, Kadara, Chawai, Attakar, Gure, Ikulu, Kurama, Kagoma, Ninzom, Kahugu, Kagoro and Moro'a.

Minerals: Molybdenite, kaolin, Columbite, Aquamarine, Sapphire, Gold.

Main Agriculture Products:

Crops: Guinea Corn, Millet, Maize, Rice, Yams, Potatoes, Ginger, Groundnuts, Chilies, Sheanuts, beni-Seed and Soya Beans.

Animals: Cattle, Sheep, Goats, Poultry and Fisheries.

Forestry: Timber and Firewood

Main Industries: Textiles, Automobile Assembly (Peugeot), fertilizers, Cigarettes, Tarpaulin, Coalter, Juter, Animal and Poultry Feed, Garments, Carpets, Bicycles Assembly, Toiletries, Sugar Cane, Edible Oil, Bricks, Soft Drinks, Yoghurt and Cheese, Furniture, Automobile Spares, Domestic Ware.

Resorts: Zaria Dam, Nimbria, Afaka Forest Reserves, Kamuku National Park and Matsirga Falls.

Culture and Other Holidays: New Year, Eid-el-Fitri, Eid-el-Kabir, Maulud, Easter, May Day, National Day and Christmas Day.

INFORMATION ON WARDS AND POLLING UNITS IN KADUNA STATE

S/N	LGACODE	NAME OF LGA	HEADQUARTERS	NO. OF WARDS	NO. OF POLLING UNITS
1.	001	BIRNIN GWARI	BIRNIN GWARI	11	201
2.	002	CHIKUN	KUJAMA	12	263
3.	003	GIWA	GIWA	11	137
4.	004	IGABI	TURUNKU	12	367
5.	005	IKARA	IKARA	10	197
6.	006	JABA	KWOI	10	110
7.	007	JEMAA	KAFANCHAN	12	216
8.	008	KACHIA	KACHIA	12	214
9.	009	KADUNA NORTH	DOKA	12	408
10.	010	KADUNA SOUTH	MAKERA	13	449
11.	011	KAGARKO	KAGARKO	10	113
12.	012	KAJURU	KAJURU	10	153
13.	013	KAURA	KAURA	10	157
14.	014	KAURU	KAURU	11	177
15.	015	KUBAU	ANCHAU	11	211
16.	016	KUDAN	HUNKUYI	10	160
17.	017	LERE	SAMINAKA	11	250
18.	018	MAKARFI	MAKARFI	10	160
19.	019	SABON GARI	SABON GARI	11	268
20.	020	SANGA	GWANTU	11	132
21.	021	SOBA	MAIGANA	11	215
22.	022	ZANGON KATAF	ZONKWA	11	215
23.	023	ZARIA	ZARIA	13	335
	TOTAL			255	5,108

Main Agriculture Products:

Crops: Guinea Corn, Millet, Maize, Rice, Yams, Potatoes, Ginger, Groundnuts, Chilies, Sheanuts, beni-Seed and Soy a Beans.

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WHAT IS ELECTION OBSERVATION?

Election observation is a process whereby a particular election is observed against set standards by an independent and impartial body of observers with the aim of identifying whether the elections conform to accepted guarantees of democratic participation identifying laws and challenges, and also making recommendations on how the process can be improved in the future. Election observation includes four main activities, namely:-

1. To observe process and activities organized during elections;
2. To collate facts and observations;
3. Interpret the facts gathered against the laws governing elections as well as basic democratic standards, in order to see whether or not the elections meet the threshold of credibility as defined by law and accepted by the international community; and
4. Outline the findings so collated and the interpretation based on them in a document or report.

Election is a process and not an event. Therefore election observation covers all the activities undertaken in connection with the election. A credible election is not just premised on events of the Election Day, but also based on the legal framework, prevailing political environment, respect for individual rights and internal party structure and collaboration among all the actors in the electoral process.

Several election related activities typically precede and follow voting. These include party primaries, campaigning, distribution of voting materials and management of distribution logistics, training and accreditation of election workers etc.

If these activities are conducted diligently with fairness, independence and even-handedness by the electoral umpire; the parties, candidates and observers are likely to regard the elections as free, fair and credible and the likelihood of legal challenge to the announced result will be minimized if not eliminated entirely. Therefore election observation should ideally focus on the whole electoral process. However, such an approach has immense cost implications and most observers focus on election day seeing it as a reflection of how the electoral process has evolved. To that extent it represents a reasonable point of engagement and this guideline focuses mainly on observation of both the voting and result collation processes.

It should be noted however that there is a difference between Election Observation and Election Monitoring. The two terms have been used interchangeably. An Electoral Monitor is an integral part of the election management structure and has a role in the administration of the election. Only the Kaduna State Independent

Electoral Commission (SIECOM) and its duly authorized personnel are empowered to monitor elections. An observer on the other hand does not have any role in the administration of the election nor any control or oversight functions. To further simplify these points:-

An election monitor exercises some level of lawful authority over the conduct of elections as well as over officials involved; an Observer has no such power.

A monitor must be a duly authorized personnel of the SIECOM; an Observer is independent and reports only to his or her organisation.

A monitor can issue instructions and take decisions on behalf of SIECOM and to that extent would ordinarily possess a greater technical knowledge of the election process than an Observer.

To enable them fulfill their functions effectively, SIECOM is responsible for training election monitors on election administration. The training of election Observers is the responsibility of the organisations that deploy them.

The roles, powers and functions of monitors are created and regulated and the authority so exercised is clearly spelt out by law.

It is important to clarify these differences because attempts by Observers to overreach the ambit of their brief have in

most cases resulted into misunderstanding and confusion. It is important to categorically emphasise once more that under the law, only SIECOM has authority to MONITOR the forthcoming Local Government Council General Elections in Kaduna State.

WHAT TO OBSERVE

An observer has an obligation to know exactly what to observe and what is important. Election Observation is not about seeking for fault but an objective assessment of the election process. It is important for a prospective Observer to study the field manuals for election officials and also have an idea of the enabling laws and a baseline understanding of the political system that is being observed. The following may act as a checklist of what an Observer should look out for while observing elections:-

The legal and institutional framework

The electoral/political environment Arrangements affecting the safety and security of election officials, voters and other participants; Management of electoral logistics and distribution of electoral materials;

The degree of political competitiveness;

The inclusiveness of the electoral system, civic education and the extent of citizen participation;

The extent of human right violations and election related violence:

Evidence of any violence, interference with private exercise of the franchise;

The professionalism of security agencies; The extent to which security has affected the participation of the people in the electoral process; The conduct of the main institutions and agencies: do they act in a mature and responsible manner?

The integrity of the conduct of the poll, including voting, the count, collation, and declaration of result; The resolution of electoral disputes.

CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is the process by which SIECOM verifies and formally authorizes the deployment of an Observer. It is a condition precedent before any organisation or individual can observe elections in Nigeria. SIECOM is the only body that can accredit election Observers for the Local Government Council Elections in Kaduna State. Accreditation confers official recognition and gives the observers access to locations where voting or balloting, counting, collation and announcement of result takes place.

All International Observers are to apply for accreditation at the SIECOM headquarters Kaduna not later than 30 days before the elections which they seek to observe. Local Observers can apply for accreditation at the SIECOM headquarters not later than 21 days before the

elections in which they seek to observe. An application for accreditation as Observer shall fulfill and be accompanied by the following:-

- a) An application letter addressed to the Chairman of SIECOM Kaduna to be submitted at the Commissions Headquarters;
- b) A copy of the organisations observation checklist;
- c) The names, passport photographs and contact telephone numbers of all prospective observers to be sponsored or deployed by the organisation;
- d) A Declaration of Neutrality and Non-Partisanship deposited to by a senior representative of the organisation on behalf of all the prospective observers sponsored by the organisation. The names of such prospective observers shall be annexed to the declaration as an exhibit. In particular the declaration shall clearly affirm under oath that such organisation is not backed by any political group, has no preference for any political party, shall respect the laws governing the elections and shall be non-partisan in their assessment and reporting;
- e) All groups applying for accreditation must include evidence that they have or shall train all prospective observers in election observation familiarizing them with their duties, the election process and how they are required to act.

Please note that SIECOM may charge a reasonable administrative fee for processing applications. SIECOM will publish information on the scale of fees if and when it decides to establish any fees.

Once accredited, the Observer:-

Shall be required to wear Observers' identification tag issued by SIECOM showing his or her name, picture and affiliate organisation of the Observer.

Is permitted to request and obtain information from the SIECOM and its officials on matters related to the Election.

Is permitted to gain access to and observe proceedings at any polling or vote collation centre subject to any reasonable restriction that may be imposed by SIECOM.

May, within practicable limits, request to inspect and verify election materials.

May, visit any polling station under the direction of the supervising officers of the mission to observe voting and counting.

Meet with members or staff of the electoral commission, candidates or their agents, voters, representatives of civil society or members of the public or community in order to gather information. Ask questions on voting and counting process from members of the electoral commission, but does not have the right to countermand a decision of the election officials.

Should, unless already knowledgeable about these, apprise himself or herself of any relevant information about the community in which he or she will be deployed as an observer.

At all times, Observers are advised to ensure that they do not take actions capable of endangering themselves or other participants in the electoral process.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OBSERVERS

Election observation is a very sensitive work. Accordingly, observers must conduct themselves responsibly. SIECOM expects that organisations have Codes of Conduct and will make every diligent effort to familiarize Observers sponsored by them with their Codes. However, we have synthesized below a set of ethical principles that will guide the Conduct of election Observers drawing from the African Union principles, ECOWAS Guidelines and declaration of principles for international Observers, endorsed by various inter-governmental and international Organisations. These guidelines apply to both local and international Observers:

- (a) An election Observer shall respect the sovereignty of the Nigerian people to establish their own government as well as the fundamental rights guarantees contained in the Nigerian Constitution enabling Citizens of Nigeria to vote and be voted for in exercise of this Sovereignty

- (b) Observers shall respect the laws of the host Country or State and the authority of the bodies charged with administering the electoral process. Observers must follow any lawful instructions from the country's governmental, security and electoral officials. Observer must also maintain a respectful attitude towards electoral officials and other national Authorities.
- (c) Observers shall abide by these guidelines and any other order terms of reference or instructions given to them by their organisation.
- (d) Observer organisations shall attend all SIECOM briefings, to which they are invited; familiarize themselves with the applicable law, insure that they transmit information from such briefings and laws to all deployed Observers and carefully adhere to the methodologies employed by their observation Mission.
- (e) Observers shall also report to the leadership of their organisations conflicts of interest or any improper conduct by other observers who are part of their Mission.
- (f) Observers shall maintain strict impartiality in the conduct of their duties and will not at any time, publicly express or exhibit any bias or preference in relation to national authorities, parties, candidates or with reference to any issue in contention in the election process.
- (g) Observers shall undertake their duties in an unobstructed manner and will not knowingly or willfully interfere in the electoral process. Nothing in these guidelines removes the right of the observers to bring irregularities to the attention of the election officers but they must not give instructions or countermand the election officers.
- (h) Observers shall base their conclusions on their personal observation or clear and convincing fact. Conclusions should not be based on or drawn from speculations, hearsay or exclusively from media or internet-based report that the Observer has not personally verified.
- (i) Observers shall not prejudge the election outcome. Observers shall display identification provided by SIECOM at all times during election duties and must provide other forms of identification if required or requested for by any national authority.
- (k) Observers shall refrain from making any personal comments to the media on what they observed during elections before the election observation mission makes their statement.
- (l) Observers shall not accept any gift or favours that might influence their work.
- (m) Observers shall at all times during the period of observation, including during private time away from Work, exercise sound judgment and display a high level of personal discretion.

- (n) Observers shall not attempt to take part in the actual administration of the election.
- (o) Observers shall not attempt to play active role in resolving disputes or complaints to avoid the possibility of compromising the Observer group's eventual position on the matter.
- (p) Observers must not take any unnecessary or undue risk. Each Observer's personal safety overrides all other consideration.
- (q) Observers are responsible for their safety and security.
- (r) Observers do not enjoy **immunity** from prosecution or criminal responsibility for electoral offences or any other offences recognized under the laws of Kaduna State and the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- (s) Observers must be very careful and exercise utmost sense of discretion in their choice of words in describing the elections.
- (t) Any Observer who flouts these guidelines may have his or her accreditation cancelled and in the case of an act that constitutes an offence under Nigerian laws, such a person may be prosecuted.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF OBSERVERS

- (a) Organisations applying for accreditation for Observer teams shall bear the costs associated with organising and deploying its monitoring mission and teams.

- (b) It is the duty of international election Observers and their sponsoring organisations to make their travel plans and fulfill the necessary immigration requirements necessary for obtaining entry clearance to visit Nigeria. Local Observers shall also be responsible for transporting their Observers to the respective polling centres where they will be deployed.
- (c) SIECOM shall not play any role in the deployment of Observers save for basic information which may be required for such deployment (e.g., a map of polling Stations).
- (d) It is the duty of the election Observer to arrange adequate logistics support. SIECOM shall not provide logistical assistance to observers whether in cash or kind.
- (e) Under no circumstance should Observers handle election documents in the polling station or physically assist the voting or counting process.
- (f) Each Observer on election observation duty shall be bound to:
 - Introduce himself or herself to the polling officer, collation or other officer responsible for the centre or duty station when they arrive. Establishing a working relationship with the electoral officers will assist observation, and is particularly important for the Count;

- Comply with the instructions of officials at the polling stations unless such instructions are manifestly unlawful. Any Observer who is dis-satisfied with the official instructions should record the circumstances of such dis-satisfaction in the appropriate observation Report;
- Avoid confrontation with election officers, security personnel, and party agents;
- Be prepared to present proof of accreditation to electoral and security personnel who request them. Observers must keep these documents with them at all times. However, because elections can sometimes be unpredictable, Observers are advised to keep the originals of their identity documents separate from accreditation documents and only carry the accreditation documents while in the field;
- Maintain complete impartiality at all times;
- Avoid conduct or communication capable of disrupting the voting and counting process;
- Be prepared to make records of conversations and comments, ask questions and, in particular ask for concrete examples when general statements are made;
- Not attempt to take an active role in resolving any disputes or complaints, even if asked to. Their role is to observe and record events at the polling stations. However, Observers may record any complaints made to them on the appropriate observation form,

including details of the complaints; including the name, organization (where relevant) and contacts of those involved;

- Be conscious that their conduct is likely to be closely observed and should, therefore, try not to be too enthusiastic or overly friendly when meeting candidates, their proxies or representatives whether or not there is prior familiarity with such persons; and
- Have a deployment plan for the polling units or stations to be covered during and what tasks to accomplish at each unit and try not to give the impression of rushing from one polling station to another without a plan.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SIECOM

The State Independent Electoral Commission recognises that it owes some responsibility to the Observers to ensure an effective observation exercise and that election observation can only be achieved if SIECOM and the Observers work together. To this end SIECOM undertakes to:

- (a) Provide all the necessary assistance to enable international Observers to sufficiently prepare and fulfill immigration requirement to do their observation work;
- (b) Issue invitation letters to international Observer missions which comply with the conditions for

Accreditation;

- (c) Guarantee unimpeded access to Observers to all the stages and process of the election;
- (d) Guarantee reasonable access to all persons concerned with election process who are within the authority of SIECOM; and
- (e) Guarantee that the election Observers shall have access to all SIECOM literature and instructions on the elections.

REPORT OF OBSERVERS

Certain basic principles are expected of the report to be released by Observers (both interim and final report). Some of these include the following:

1. Care must be taken in the use of language suggesting negative/positive assessment of the elections, such as 'free and fair', 'fraud', 'rigging', 'flawed' and 'irregularity'. As much as SIECOM recognises the right of Observers to make their respective assessments, such determinations should be done with utmost discretion and responsibility. Any conclusions reached must be supported by clear factual evidence.
2. Performance lapses and genuine mistakes should be separated from deliberate wrongdoing. Any acts suggesting unlawful conduct or clear wrongdoing by electoral officials should be documented as clearly as

possible and forwarded to the SIECOM headquarters for the attention of the Chairman.

3. The Observation report should be a product of careful assessment of the frequency, pattern, distribution and effect of any occurrences. In particular, irregularities must be carefully examined to determine their probable overall effect on electoral outcome.
4. Care should be taken not to include in the report unproven allegations or unconfirmed incidents. If, however, it is considered necessary in any report to include unconfirmed incidents, the report should clearly state that such incidents are unconfirmed as well as indicating any efforts made to secure Confirmation.
5. Reports should be structured in a logical manner.