

**KADUNA STATE
INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION**

**Report of the
2021 LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS ELECTION
KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA**

JUNE, 2022

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Commission has just concluded its 2021 Local Government Councils Election, the second to be conducted by use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). The use of EVM to conduct our elections started with the desire of our visionary, dynamic, proactive, fearless and result oriented Governor, His Excellency, Mallam Nasir Ahmad El-rufa'i OFR, when in 2015 he commissioned KAD-SIECOM to deploy technology in our Local Government Councils Elections in order to improve its integrity. Together with a team of committed Staff of the State Independent Electoral Commission, this desire was successfully accomplished in 2018. The Commission now has the benefit of possessing first-hand experience and technical know-how in the use of e-voting in Nigeria and how to make the EVM applicable to all elections in Nigeria and beyond.

The introduction of the technology in our Local Government Councils Election in 2018, made Kaduna State the first State in Nigeria, and Nigeria the second country in Africa to deploy electronic voting in its elections at the grassroots level. The Commission, therefore, wishes to express its exceptional gratitude to the State Governor, His Excellency, Malam Nasir Ahmad El-rufa'i OFR who propelled the Commission to actualize this vision, and for always providing KAD-SIECOM a free-hand to conduct our elections without any interference with level playing ground for all Political Parties. His insisting that the electronic voting machines must be up-graded before the 2021 election in spite of the dwindling State resources after observing how the EVMs were circumvented by desperate Politicians to rig the election in 2018, and

his non-interference with the conduct of our elections are classical examples of transparent and inspiring leadership.

Thanks are also due to the indefatigable Deputy Governor, Her Excellency, Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe who stood in during this election severally for His Excellency to enable the citizens enjoy the dividends of democracy and fruits of good governance, when he was attending to other important matters. This is highly appreciated.

The Commission would also like to express its gratitude to the Honourable Speaker, Right Hon. Yusuf Ibrahim Zailani, the Chairman House Committee on Judiciary, Hon. (Barr.) Emmanuel Kantiok and all members of the Kaduna State House of Assembly (KDHA) for their numerous support and invaluable contributions which cannot be here listed. The enormous contributions of Malam Abbas Balarabe Lawal, Secretary to the State Government (SSG) support towards the provision of resources to ensure success of the 2021 election is hereby humbly appreciated. My heartfelt thanks also go to the Chief Judge of Kaduna State for his timely establishment of the Election Petitions Tribunals to hear and determine election petitions in furtherance of maintaining the sanctity of the election process.

The State Executive Council must be specially commended for supporting the Governor His Excellency, Malam Nasir Ahmad El-rufa'í OFR to spear head the introduction of electronic voting into the electoral process in Nigeria way back in 2018, what the Federal Government is still trying to achieve in 2023. To all, we are indeed grateful.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to the Commission members, Commission Secretary, the Director of Finance and Supply (DFS), Head of Departments (HODs), Unit Leaders and the Staff of the Offices of the Commission in the Headquarters and the 23 Local Government Areas. They worked tirelessly and meticulously together for the success of this election. This is a testimony of a collective commitment to KAD-SIECOM as an organization to ensuring free, fair and credible election. The commitment of the Commission members in introducing the EVM provides a solid base and foundation that will no doubt entrench and deepen democracy as a true prime mover of development in Kaduna State. You would be leaving behind indelible footprints.

The 1999 Constitution (as amended) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, vests the responsibility of arranging and conducting the registration of persons qualified to vote, maintain and revise the Register of voters on the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). INEC is, therefore, the only custodian of the Voters Register in this country, while the State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) are permitted by the Constitution to use the INEC's Voters Register during their elections. Special thanks are due to the Management of INEC for releasing the up-to-date soft copy of the Register to KAD-SIECOM and rendered other assistance without which successful conduct of the 2021 election would have not been possible.

Many Stakeholders actively participated in the planning of this election. Here, I refer to the Leaders of Political Parties, Civil Society Organizations, Officers and men of the Security Agencies, Gentlemen of the Press, the Election Observer Groups and other Stakeholders of the Kaduna State electoral process, for their cooperation and

collaborative contributions. Each time we called for a meeting no matter the short notice, you were always available to advice on the way forward. To these huge Stakeholder groups, we are most grateful. This gives assurance that together we can successfully deliver free, fair and credible elections, and we look forward to your continued support and collaboration in our future election activities.

Special thanks also to the Project Manager of European Center for Electoral Support (ECES), Mr. Hamza Fassi-Fihiri who accepted our invitation within a very short notice to share his wealth of experience in the field of electronic voting World-wide during our Kano Retreat. The Commission values the ECES and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) longstanding support of our electoral activities which has greatly helped us to gained immense experience and track record of successes with a pool of best practices necessary and essential for entrenching democracy as the appropriate form of government in Nigeria.

Finally, this publication would not have seen the day without the strong commitment, hard work and perseverance of Prof. Joseph Gambo Akpoko, Permanent Commissioner, Public Affairs and Information whom I sincerely thank.

Thank you all.

Dr. Saratu Binta Dikko-Audu
Chairman, KAD-SIECOM

PREFACE

Nigeria is a country of strong oral traditions. This is why the Malian writer and Ethnologue, Amadou Hampathé Bâ (1960), stressed the wealth of non documented-knowledge and information held by Nigerian people in their heads by saying: "In Nigeria, an old person dying is equivalent to a library burning". Hampathé Bâ explained : "Nigerians are not people with a tradition of written literature, but have developed the art of information in a most special manner. While it is not written, their literature is not less beautiful. How many poems, epics, historic and narratives, didactic tales, myths and legends have so been transmitted through centuries, carried by the prodigious memory of the men with an oral tradition, passionately in love with beautiful language and almost all poets?".

The above evidence has been corroborated by surveys in some State Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) for the lack of contextualized documentation of their experience and successes that could serve as reference resource. Kaduna State Independent Electoral Commission, with its well acknowledged work from 2015-2021 of promoting free, fair and credible elections, has evolved to become the lead Nigerian State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) in championing contextualized documentation of its electoral activities for all interested readers. With the 2021 Kaduna State Local Government Councils Election having been conducted, this publication provides its successes and challenges.

Election is one of the key components in ensuring democracy because it enhances citizens participation in governance, ensures government accountability and encourages political competition. A free, fair and credible election is one of the basic and crucial prerequisites and

elements of democratic government and governance. An election would be credible, when rules, regulations and laws governing the electoral process are followed, and ultimately the credible candidates are freely and fairly elected to represent the electorate.

Similarly, in the words of the late US President Abraham Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address in 1863, he said “man has not yet developed a fairer and more just system of establishing governments than democracy which is government of the people by the people for the people”. The freedom of choice of leaders as given by democracy is not just a fundamental civil and political freedom, but avails every citizen the right and opportunity, without distinction and without unreasonable restrictions to (a) take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen his/her representatives, and (b) vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot.

The major purpose is, therefore, how to ensure that the right of free choice is not defeated or corrupted. Once that right of free choice is violated, the basis of democracy and its product, good governance, is undermined.

Since returned to democracy in 1999, the Commission has conducted five Local Government Councils Elections (LGCEs). The first was conducted in 2004, second was in 2008, the third in 2012, the fourth in 2018, while the fifth was conducted in 2021. Prior to the 2018 election, the conduct of free, fair and credible elections had been a challenge facing the citizens of Kaduna State to the extent that the image of the Kaduna State Independent Electoral Commission (KAD-

SIECOM) had been so battered that the mindset of the average citizen on matters relating to election and KAD-SIECOM was negative and pessimistic. While a number of factors had contributed to making the situation so, the yearning, longing and desire of the electorate remained strong that one day, the State will get it right. For two consecutive years now, however, the KAD-SIECOM has blazed the trail in the conduct of free, fair and credible election into the State Local Government Councils. One may want to ask, what did they do differently? The answer is not farfetched. They decided to do things differently by introducing the use of electronic voting machine instead of the manual ballot papers voting system.

The previous Kaduna State Local Government Councils Election was held in May, 2018. The Local Government Councils tenure is three (3) years. This means the next election should have been held in May, 2021. However, due to some exigencies, the election could not hold till September 4th, 2021. One of the mandate of the Commission is to promote both the entrenchment and deepening of democracy using information as the vehicle for effectively carrying out the process. This publication provides information on the process and conduct of the 2021 Kaduna State LGCE for the concerned general public consumption.

I wish to commend and warmly acknowledge the diligent Zonal reports, observations, discussions and other contributions made by all Commission members and the Keynote Speaker. The rapporteurs at the Kano Retreat did a wonderful job. That you are not mentioned individually does not belittle your contributions. To you all, I am highly appreciative and grateful for making the compilation of this publication easier. I have presented the various contributions in two broad parts.

The first part presents a summary of the Pre-election major activities, the Election Day activities as well as the Post-election principal activities. The second part contains the various versions of the election challenges and recommendations presented by observer groups, Commission members and the Keynote Speaker at the Kano Retreat.

The 2021 election reports show that there were malfunctioning of machines in some Wards such as sudden loss of power, non responsive of the touch screen and failure of the machines to power on. These were, however, quickly addressed by the Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-rapid response Team attached to every Local Government Area. Majority of the other challenges were sectional, ethnic and religious, incubated and hatched by desperate politicians and their cohort whose guiding dictum was victory at all costs and by all means necessary. It is, however, no surprise in the situation where elections have become a profit venture and thus encourage the attitude of winning by all means which breeds various forms of cheating and a tendency to violence. Cheating and violence from the tendency to use sectional, ethnic, religious and other divisions to try and win elections by all means, defeat the basic principle of democracy which is about freedom of choice, fair, peaceful and credible election.

The primary reason for adopting the electronic voting machines was to combat endemic fraud in the manual ballot paper system. Notwithstanding the lapses pointed out above, the public views generally show that the pre-election, voting day and post-election activities were conducted relatively smoothly. The use of the electronic

voting machine in the 2021 election was overall adjudged a resounding success.

Indeed, the 2021 election benefited immensely from the lessons learnt from the successes and failure of the 2018 election. Consequently, a new innovation was introduced to detect PVCs used twice on the same machine which increased faith in the ability of the Commission to conduct free, fair and credible election making KAD-SIECOM now a template and reference center for other electoral management bodies in Nigeria and beyond to emulate.

I wish to refer readers to the sensitization workshops/meetings, publications and radio/TV Jingles in which we appealed to the voting public to play by the rule, exercise restraint throughout the voting hours, shun violence, protect and use their Permanent Voter Card (PVC) wisely, how to use the up-graded EVM, resist undue influence of politicians, be magnanimous in victory if won, and accept defeat in good faith if lose, offences and penalties involved, etc. We are most grateful to all who heeded our appeal and cooperated. Without this cooperation the election would have been a monumental failure. However, we were unhappy with the level of violence that marred the election in some parts of the State in spite of our humble appeal.

Some recommendations have been proffered to avert future occurrence and serve as basis for planning future election activities. The publication also contains details about the Commission together with names and addresses of individuals, and it is hoped that its circulation will further stimulate questions and exchange of information within the State and beyond. Above all, this publication is

written for the general public consumption, therefore, the Commission would be most interested to learn the extent to which the publication is found useful, and would welcome constructive criticisms and suggestions to improve its future elections and publications. If these are achieved, they will further strengthen the Commission's commitment to free, fair and credible election in Kaduna State.

This publication contains the challenges and recommendations emanating from the Kaduna State 2021 LGCE and I hope this will help other EMBs in refining their own electoral processes. It might not address all the issues in the electoral system, but it constitutes a valuable and reference electoral resource.

Finally, this publication can be considered a joint responsibility of the Commission members in the sense that much of the content is based on their reports, observations and discussions. However, responsibility for writing and editing the reports was delegated to me, who must be held responsible for any errors and omissions. For these, and any other shortcomings, I apologize.

Thank you.

Prof. Joseph Gambo Akpoko

Commissioner, Public Affairs and Information

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AEOs	Assistant Electoral Officers
APC	All Progressives Congress
APG	Advance Payment Guarantee
APOs	Assistant Presiding Officers
BVN	Bank Verification number
COR	Certificate of Return
DFS	Director of Finance and Supply
DSS	Department of State Services
ECES	European Center for Electoral Support
EMBs	Electoral Management Bodies/Election Management Boards
EMPTech	EMPEROR TECHNOLOGY
EOs	Electoral Officers
EVM	Electronic Voting Machine
FRSC	Federal Road Safety Commission
HODs	Head of Departments
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission

KDHA	Kaduna State House of Assembly
KADIRS	Kaduna State Internal Revenue Service
KAD-SIECOM	Kaduna State Independent Electoral Commission
LGA	Local Government Area
LGC	Local Government Council
LGCEs	Local Government Council Elections
LGROs	Local Government Returning Officers
MTs	Master Trainers
NDLEA	National Drug Law Enforcement Agency
NIS	Nigerian Immigration Service
NSCDC	Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps
NYSC	National Youth Service Corps
OFR	Order of the Federal Republic
PCs	Poll Clerks
PDP	Peoples Democratic Party
POs	Presiding Officers
PRP	Peoples Redemption Party
PU	Poling Unit

PVC	Permanent Voter Card
SCR	Smart Card Reader
SEC	State Electoral Commissioner
SIECOM	State Independent Electoral Commission
SPOs	Supervisory Presiding Officers
SSG	Secretary to the State Government
ToTs	Training of Trainers
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WROs	Ward Returning Officers