



# Situational Statement on the 2021 Lagos Local Government Council Elections

Saturday, July 24, 2021  
Lagos State

## Introduction

For Saturday 24 July 2021, Yiaga Africa's Watching the Vote (WTV) deployed trained, accredited roving observers to observe the process across the 20 LGAs and 37 LCDAs in the State. Though Yiaga Africa did not deploy the Parallel Votes Tabulation (PVT) Methodology for the Lagos LGA elections, it deployed a robust election observation methodology that includes observation of the election day process (from opening and setup of the polling units, accreditation, voting, announcement and posting of the official results) at the polling units and the result collation process at the 20 LGAs Results Collation Centre's.

The midday situational statement provides information on the setup of polls, availability of election materials, the commencement of accreditation and voting and critical incidents that may impact the quality of the election. The preliminary findings in this statement are as of 2 pm on Election Day, July 24, 2021.

## Watching The Vote Findings

On the eve of the election, the analysis of the final list of candidates for the election as of 5 pm, 23rd July 2021, revealed that a total of 133 candidates will be contesting for the office of the Chairman with 131 Vice Chairmanship candidates. Of the 133 candidates for the office for the Chairman, 16 are women and of the 131 Vice Chairman candidates, 106 are women. Indicating that the contesting parties fielded more women for the office of the Vice-Chairman.

While 15 parties are to contest in the election, the WTV observers reported that an average of 3 political parties was on the ballot papers for both the LGA/LCDA Chairman and Council election. As observed, there was reasonable compliance with the no-movement directive of the state government, however, voter turnout was abysmally low across the LGA's/LCDA with voters absent in some polling units as of 11am.

The findings presented in this statement are based on information received from the WTV observers on set-up, and the commencement of voting and accreditation at the polling units.

**1) Late opening of polls and deployment of polling materials:** As of 8:30 am, Yiaga Africa WTV observers reported that no polling official was seen in 61 of the polling units visited. Late opening and commencement of polls was a general observation across the state. Specifically, Mushin LGA recorded late deployment. Election officials were still waiting to be deployed to their assigned polling units by 8:16 am. By 10:00 am, only 17 of the polling units visited had polling officials present and were concluding set-up to commence accreditation and voting process.

**2) *Polling officials were deployed as expected:*** Majority of the polling units visited had an average of 2 polling officials present as stated in the LASIEC election guideline. Also notable is deployment of women as polling officials. At least 1 of 2 polling officials were women.

**3) *Election essential materials were adequately deployed:*** WTV tracked the presence of essential materials such as the register of voters, polling official stamp, voting cubicle, ink pad, ballot boxes, incident form and polling unit booklet in polling units. These materials and many more were seen in most of the polling units that were opened. However, the WTV observers reported that the majority of the Smart Card Readers were not fully charged. In addition, the reports indicate that the Smart Card Readers were not used in some of the polling units visited.

**4) *Deployment of Security personnel:*** WTV observed the presence of security officers specifically from the Nigerian Police Force and/or NSCDC in the majority of the polling units visited. For instance, in Polling unit 039 Wesley Primary School, WTV observed the presence of over 10 security officials. In some polling units, observers reported the presence of the Lagos Neighborhood Safety Corps (LNSC). However, in Ward C Surulere and in Lawanson, Mushin LGA, most of the Polling Units did not have security personnel on-site as of 11 am. Additionally, a few security personnel were seen on the streets of Lagos state.

**5) *Majority of political parties did not deploy party agents to the polls:*** APC and PDP party agents were the only party agents seen in the majority of the polling units visited. APC and PDP party agents were seen in the majority of the polling units visited. While other party agents were seen in a few polling units.

**6) *No strict compliance with COVID-19 Protocol:*** Though WTV observed the provision of Hand Sanitizers and handheld infrared thermometers across the polling units, there was no enforcement on the usage. Polling officials and voters were not adhering to the COVID-19 non-pharmaceutical safety protocol and physical distancing.

**7) *Misconduct at the Polling Units:*** WTV observers reported that voters were intimidated, harassed/assaulted in a few polling units during accreditation and voting, in Ward B Badagry LGA.

## **Reported Critical Incidents**

- **Confusion over the inclusion of a Party's name on the ballot:** There was violent disruption of the accreditation and voting process across polling units in Shomolu LGA; this was fueled by the confusion over the inclusion of a party name on the ballot. The name printed on the ballot was YP which is not one of the officially recognised political parties. In a few of the polling units observed, the YPP supporters protested the non-inclusion of their party on the ballot and asked voters to boycott the election.
- **Attack on WTV Observer:** In PU 008, Ward B Badagry, an observer was beaten up for recording an attempt to snatch a ballot box by a party agent.

## **Conclusion**

Yiaga Africa's WTV observers will continue to watch the process until the end of voting and the posting of results. In addition, the WTV observers will be at the LGA result collation Centre's to observe and provide timely information on the process.

Yiaga Africa calls on all political parties and candidates, LASIEC and security agencies to play their parts in ensuring a peaceful and credible election. Yiaga Africa also calls on all voters and the good people of Lagos state to remain patient and peaceful as the voting process concludes and collation process commences.

Yiaga Africa with her citizen observers is observing the election on behalf of the people of Lagos State and Nigeria, to ensure people's votes are accurately counted.

The Watching The Vote project is "**Driven by Data – For All Nigerians – Beholden to None!**"

Thank you and God Bless Nigeria.

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