



CLEEN
FOUNDATION

Election Security Threats Assessment Ondo State Governorship Election, 2020

- *Justice Sector Reform*

Introduction

- This Election Security Threats Assessment (ESTA) report explores election risk factors in the 2020 Ondo governorship election
- Main objective is to assist relevant stakeholders in devising and deploying appropriate responses to the risk factors

Data and Methods

- Qualitative research design
- Use of primary and secondary data
- Primary data collected through the EVMAT (questionnaire designed by the Electoral Institute of INEC and CLEEN Foundation)
- 851 purposively selected respondents in 18 LGAs
- Equality of LGAs: 50 per LGA

Data and Methods

- Exemptions in 4 LGAs, namely Idanre (28), Okitipupa (42) and Owo (45); and Irele (0)
- Rural and urban dimensions captured
- 161 (19.75%) experts; 654 (80.24%) general public
- 345 (42.3%) male; 470 (57.7%) female

Key Findings

- Despite emerging signs to the contrary, especially violence in electioneering campaigns, fake news and hate speeches, there is a hugely impressive expectation of a peaceful election expressed by 86.4% of the respondents
- Only 4.3% of respondents thought otherwise

Key Findings

- This perception is buttressed by respondents' views with respect to how they expect the election to go 'on the whole'. In this regard, 82.3% of the respondents expects the election to be 'peaceful' or 'very peaceful' (Average: 84.35%).
- The possibility of a peaceful governorship election in the state is very high, especially if all the key actors discharge their responsibilities professionally and competently.

Key Findings

- Yet, respondents identified election risk factors that could trigger violence if not mitigated:
- Exclusion and discrimination against the youth (92.3%)
- Undue influence of money and godfathers (86.9%)
- Activities of troublesome politicians, political parties, leaders and candidates (86.7%)
- Distribution, location and adequacy of polling units and voting points (80.4%)
- Political interference in the work of INEC (79.6)

Key Findings

- Lack of transparency and corruption by party agents (77.5%)
- Movement/distribution of election materials (77.2%)
- Lack of transparency and disagreements over selection of party officials and candidates (76.7%)
- Overall disenchantment with the electoral process (75.1%)
- Disorderly party rallies and campaigns (73.1%)
- Resort to hate speech (72.7%)
- Widespread availability and use of hard drugs (72.2%).

Key Findings

- Actors whose in/actions could pose some security threats were also identified:
- a) Political party thugs (88.5%), b) Religious extremists/cultists/armed groups (74.9%), c) security agencies (73.3%), d) political parties (71.2%) e) the media (67.1%), f) INEC (65.0%) and g) the judiciary (64.8%)

Key Findings

- Risk factors associated with each actor:
- **Political parties:** undue influence of money and godfathers (86.9%), activities of troublesome politicians, political parties, leaders and candidates (86.7%), lack of transparency and disagreements over selection of party officials and candidates (76.7%),

Key Findings

- **Political parties cont:** inadequate training and corruption of party agents (77.5%), disorderly party rallies, processions and campaigns (73.1%), lack of respect for party rules (66.9%), defections and carpet crossing (65.7%), and contentious party conventions and primaries (64.7%)

Key Findings

- **INEC:** the partiality of INEC officials (83.0%), substitution of trained electoral officials (74.8%), failure to prosecute electoral offenders (72.9%), poor voter education (72.9%), movement/distribution of election materials (71.4%), distribution of PVCs (68.7%), quality of electoral officials (68.7%), underage registration (68.2%)

Key Findings

- **Security agencies:** partiality (88.1%), aggressive and excessive use of force (86.4%), inadequate or excessive presence of security agents (81.6%), poor training and low professionalism (81.4%), lack of synergy among security agents (81.0%), low sense of safety among the public (79.6%), lack of synergy between INEC and security agencies (79.5%), problems with deployment of security agents (77.2%), inadequate training and conduct of security agents (82.0%), problem with welfare of security agents (62.2%)

Key Findings

- **The judiciary:** corruption and integrity of the judiciary (85.4%); conflicting and contradicting court decisions (78.3%); partiality of the judiciary (77.7%), delay in the handling of pre-election cases (74.3%); capacity of the judiciary (71.2%)

Key Findings

- **Media:** Partisanship, favouritism and partiality (80.5%); misinformation of the public (79.1%); broadcasting and publishing of hate speech (77.2%); lack of professionalism (77.2%); sensationalism and provocation (74.8%); failure of regulatory bodies to ensure adherence to established rules by the media (74.7%); abuse of social media (68.6%); unequal access to media (65.7%).

Key Findings

- Overall, the expectation of a peaceful election is very high across the state
- However, there are variations across LGAs: 13 in Green, one in Ambers, three in Red
- Green: Akoko NW, Akoko SE, Akoko SW, Akure North, Ifedore, Ondo West, Ondo East, Odigbo, Irele, Ilaje, Ile Oluji/Oke Igbo, Okitipupa, Ose, Owo.
- Amber: Ese Odo
- Red: Akoko NE, Akure South and Idanre

Recommendations

- Collaboration and continuous stakeholders engagement (INEC, political parties, security agencies, mass media and CSOs)
- Intensification of political education and sensitization of citizens by stakeholders
- Effective regulation of the mass media: ensure compliance with established rules and standards; and punishment for defaulters
- Detection and punishment for the broadcasting/publishing of fake news and hate speech.

Recommendations

- Greater attention to the training, welfare and professionalism of security agents
- Effective regulation of political finance to reduce undue influence of money
- Special engagement with young people by stakeholders is critical.
- Prompt responses to the early warning signs identified in this and other related reports
- Arrest and prosecution of electoral offenders