



NEC CHAIRPERSON'S PRESENTATION AT THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS 2023
TOPIC: INITIAL REVIEW OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS: SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT
25 October 2023

1. Review of the Electoral Process – Successes, Challenges and Lessons Learnt

a. Successes:

- The transition from the Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) system of voter registration to the use of biometric technology to register voters made the voter roll more accurate and contributed to a generally smooth voting exercise and the unprecedented huge turnout achieved. The biometric voter roll laid the fundamental basis for the huge success scored on 10 October 2023.
- The timely development of the various guidelines, regulations and procedures for the conduct of both the BVR and the 10 October Elections by the Board of Commissioners and technical staff in time for those activities assisted with the success of 10 October.
- The Commission farsightedness in ensuring that materials were deployed to hard-to-reach areas such as the South East and Lofa County, using various means of transportation including the use of commercial shipping entities.
- Another success story is the accuracy with which the materials were packaged by the Commission Operations Team. To package materials for 5,890 polling places, in a very short window, with such degree of accuracy speaks to the level of technical capacity of the NEC technicians.
- The management of the general procurement process. For example, a Liberian business won the bid to procure the prepacked materials and they actually delivered under a very tight schedule.
- The successful management of the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders including this steering committee, Ambassadorial missions, the One UN System, ECOWAS, AU, EU, observation missions, etc. contributed to the success of 10 October polls.
- The collaboration between the NEC and the joint security proved very helpful in maintaining the peace and keeping the electoral process on course, notwithstanding the challenges faced by both the Commission and the joint security with respect to limited logistics and human resources coupled with difficult terrains for deployment.

b. Challenges

- Reduction of budget and delayed payment of funds;
- The general issue of limited infrastructures such as road network, precinct facilities, etc.
- Misinformation, disinformation and faked news against the commission and the electoral process;
- The criminal mischief of some of the temporary staff;
- Inability of the Commission to increase number of precincts as was previously planned. This led to overcrowded precincts, running the polls at some precincts into the night hours.
- Limited resources for CVE vis a vis the issue of invalid ballots.



c. Lessons Learnt

- Payment for elections should be done early enough in the future to address the issue timely procurement and deployment of electoral materials.
- The issue of increasing the number of precincts should be seriously considered for future elections.
- The reason for the huge number of invalid ballots will be investigated, while considering the trend since the 2005 elections.
- The Commission will take actions to further improve its Communication mechanisms.

2. Status of Electoral Preparedness for the Run-off

The Commission is prepared to organize the presidential run-off election slated for 14 November 2023. The following actions support the level of the Commission's preparedness:

- All the funds for the elections have now been made available by the Government of Liberia;
- Packaging of materials for the 2,080 precincts (5,890 polling places) has begun at the NEC Central warehouse and these materials are expected to be deployed in time for Election Day.
- The run-off ballot is being designed and is expected to be ready for deployment in time for the run-off election;
- Printing of the Final Registration Roll for the run-off begins today, 25 October 2023.
- Brushoff training for staff will commence in the coming days.
- The NEC administration and technical team are committed to this cause and they are working day and night to make this happen.

3. Promoting Peaceful Electoral Environment

While encouraging all stakeholders to remain peaceful and abide by the Farmington River Declaration on peaceful electoral process, the commission remains committed to conducting the process in free, fair, inclusive and credible manner as a way of contributing to the maintaining of peace. The Commission will also continue to ensure that complaints are adjudicated expeditiously without fear or favor.