



## **Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO)**

### **CONTACT**

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### **CODEO's Pre-election Environment Observation Statement (15<sup>th</sup> July- 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2016)**

#### **Introduction**

The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) is pleased to release its findings on the pre-election environment for the period mid July to 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2016. This report is the first in the series of CODEO's pre-election environment observations for the 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections, and captures bi-weekly reports filed by CODEO's Long Term Observers (LTOs) deployed across the country. The findings in this report are based on bi-weekly field reports submitted in the month of July and August from 134 out of the 138 constituencies randomly selected from the 10 regions of Ghana. Guided by a checklist, CODEO's LTOs observe the general political environment, including election-related preparatory activities by state and non-state actors, civic/voter education programs as well as political party campaign activities. The LTOs also observe the conduct of the security agencies, electoral irregularities and pre-election disputes adjudication.

#### **Summary of Findings:**

- The National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) and the Electoral Commission (EC) have stepped-up civic/voter education across the country using radio as the main medium for educating the public.
- There is low visibility of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working in the areas of election violence monitoring, and peace promotion activities.
- There is also little or no targeted work on the promotion, and empowerment of women candidates, as well as candidates living with disabilities (People with Disabilities (PWDs) across the country.
- The two larger parties, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), are the most visible parties with regards to election campaigning activities across the country.

#### **Main Findings**

##### **1. Election-Related Preparatory Activities by State and Non-State Actors (e.g. EC, CSOs)**

During the reporting period, CODEO LTO observers reported low levels of election-related preparatory activity amongst key stakeholders. For example, close to a quarter (23%) of CODEO LTOs reported either observing or hearing the Electoral Commission undertake recruitment and training of their election staff. Other related activities observed during the reporting period include re-registration of persons who previously registered using National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) cards, continuous voters' registration exercise, and replacement of missing/lost voters ID

cards. In addition, a little over a third of LTOs (39%) also reported either observing/hearing the EC undertake District Inter-Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) meetings.

With regards to Civil Society Organisations' election related-preparatory activities, CODEO's LTOs also reported seeing low levels of activities of CSOs across the country. Our findings revealed that only 12 out of the 138 constituencies under observation have CSOs conducting candidates' platform monitoring programs. However, in 44 out of the 138 observation constituencies CODEO's LTOs observed/heard CSOs conducting violence monitoring and peace promotion.

## 2. Civic/Voter Education Platforms/Modes, Actors and Targeted Audience

CODEO's LTOs reported seeing limited civic/voter education activities in the country. However; they noted that where it occurred, voter education was mainly done through radio. In more than half (56%) of the constituencies observed, LTOs reported hearing civic/voter education on radio discussion programs. A third (33%) of LTOs also reported that they observed/heard of civic/voter education at community meetings; on posters; and through street announcements in the constituencies.

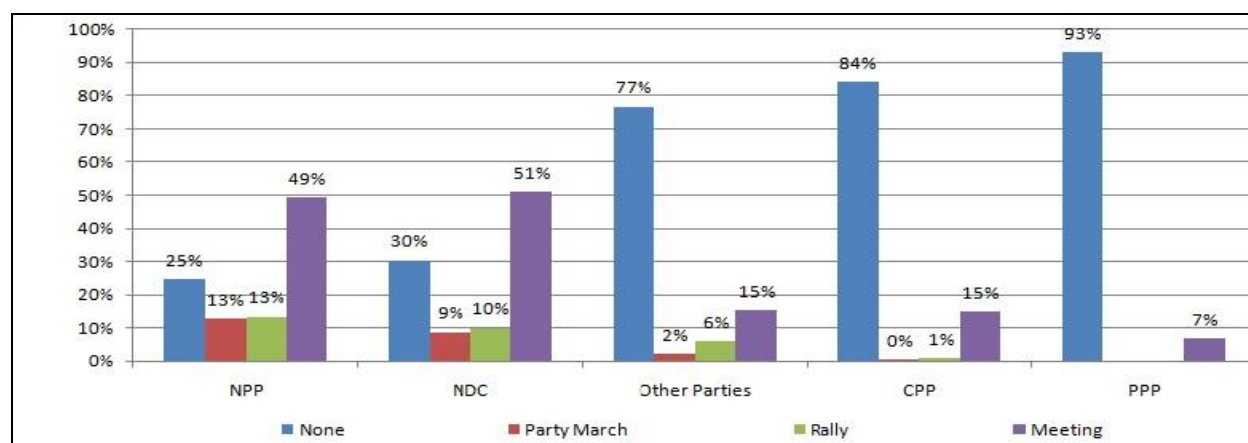
Election stakeholders that were seen conducting civic/voter education across the country included the NCCE which ranked first, followed by the EC, Political Parties and CSOs.

Although the general citizenry was the main focus for civic and voter education, in terms of specific groups targeted as audience of the education message, the youth ranked first, followed by party supporters and workers, women, traditional authority and lastly, disability groups.

## 3. Political Parties' Election-related Activities and Policy Issue-based Campaigning in the Constituencies

When CODEO's LTOs were asked to select from a list of campaign activities (namely party march, rally, meeting and demonstration) that the political parties were engaged in within the reporting period, the NDC was observed to be having more meetings than the other political parties, whereas the NPP was also observed to be having more party marches and rallies than all the other political parties in the constituencies under observation. Other parties like the Progressive Peoples Party (PPP) and the Convention Peoples Party (CPP) were less visible in terms of their campaign activities. (Figure. 1 below shows details of the findings of political party campaign activities)

**Fig 1: Political Party Campaign Activities**



Furthermore, CODEO's LTOs, reported that the parties discussed various policy issues on their campaign platforms in the various constituencies observed. Four key policy priority issues CODEO LTOs observed were: Education (22%); Unemployment (18%); Health (16%); and corruption (15%).

#### **4. Participation of Marginalized and Disadvantaged Groups in Election-related Activities**

CODEO LTOs reported of very few interventions aimed at enhancing the capacity of women and persons living with disability (PWD) candidates' in the upcoming election by CSOs or any other bodies in the constituencies. Almost all CODEO LTOs (96%) reported they did not observe/hear CSO conduct women candidates' empowerment programs. Similarly, almost all LTOs (97%) also reported they did not observe/hear CSOs conduct PWD candidates' empowerment programs.

In terms of featuring these disadvantaged groups on political platforms, CODEO LTOs reported that the NPP leads as the party that featured women and PWDs as the leading speakers on their campaign platform followed by the NDC, CPP and PPP.

#### **5. Election-Related Irregularities (e.g. vote-buying and breach of electoral laws)**

Generally, CODEO LTOs reported low incidence of election irregularities during the period. However in a few constituencies (3%) LTOs reported they witnessed some people being given money and other valuables, ostensibly, to influence their vote while close to 6% only heard of such incidents; this was observed in some constituencies in all except for the Volta and Upper West region.

#### **6. Election-related Security Activities by Security Agencies**

CODEO findings reveal very few election related security activities taking place across the country during this period, as well as few election related cases under investigation. For example, close to a third of constituencies (32%) reported of either observing or hearing of a DISEC or REGSEC meeting. In terms of election related cases, one of such cases was a scuffle between NPP and NDC panelists on Rivers FM in Amenfi East in the Western Region; the case has been transferred to the Asankragua Police Division. Generally, the LTOs reported that the security agencies have acted in accordance with the law within the reporting period.

#### **7. Pre-election Petitions and Dispute Resolutions**

CODEO LTOs reported of limited pre-election petitions lodged at the district courts in the various constituencies during the period of observation. Almost all (94%) of CODEO LTOs reported that they did not observe/hear of any pre-election petitions lodged at the district courts.

Finally, the EC and NCCE topped the list of institutions conducting electoral justice education for political parties followed by CSOs and the Judiciary.

#### **CODEO's Perspective on the Findings:**

- CODEO notes the reporting period coincided with a low activity period between the conclusion of the voters register exhibition exercise and the start of campaign activities and this may explain the low levels of election related preparatory activities reported by LTOs. It is expected that the level of activities will increase as key stakeholders intensify their efforts and the campaign period kicks into gear.

- It is important to note that radio continue to be an important source of informing, educating and communicating to the public and prospective voters. It places a grave responsibility on the media fraternity to utilise their platforms constructively to promote a credible and peaceful election 2016.

**Recommendations:**

- CODEO entreats CSOs to intensify their activities across the country particularly in the area of violence monitoring and peace promotion, monitoring of candidates platforms, women and PWDs candidates empowerment and educating the citizenry on their civic rights, duties and responsibilities to compliment the work of the NCCE and the EC.
- CODEO urges the EC and NCCE not to limit their civic/ voter education to the traditional media particularly radio but also take advantage of community meetings platforms, street announcement and other forms/modes of educating the public.
- CODEO wishes to remind all political parties and the electorate that vote-buying and vote-selling is an offence under Ghana's law and should desist from engaging in such activities. Apart from that such activities undermine free and fair elections and our nascent democracy. CODEO calls on the Ghana Police Service to be vigilant; to arrest and prosecute individuals and groups engaged in these activities, particularly when some of these activities are occurring in the open.

**Conclusion:**

CODEO notes that the election campaign period is now in full swing and expect all election stakeholders to intensify their activities. CODEO assures the public that it will continue to observe the pre-election environment and will duly share its findings with the public on a monthly basis. CODEO's long-term constituency pre-election observation is made possible with the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Signed:



**Albert Arhin,  
National Coordinator, CODEO**

Dated: Friday, September 23, 2016

## APPENDIX

### List of Constituencies Covered by CODEO for Long-Term Observation in the Reporting Period

| S/No | Region      | District                  | Constituency           |
|------|-------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 1.   | Ashanti     | Adansi North              | Adansi Asokwa          |
| 2.   | Ashanti     | Adansi South              | Akrofuom               |
| 3.   | Ashanti     | Afigya Kwabre             | Afigya Kwabre South    |
| 4.   | Ashanti     | Ahafo Ano North           | Ahafo Ano North        |
| 5.   | Ashanti     | Ahafo Ano South           | Ahafo Ano South East   |
| 6.   | Ashanti     | Asante Akim North         | Asante Akim North      |
| 7.   | Ashanti     | Asante Akim South         | Asante Akim South      |
| 8.   | Ashanti     | Asokore Mampong           | Asawase                |
| 9.   | Ashanti     | Asokwa                    | Asokwa                 |
| 10.  | Ashanti     | Bantama                   | Bantama                |
| 11.  | Ashanti     | Bekwai Municipal          | Bekwai                 |
| 12.  | Ashanti     | Bosome Freho              | Bosome Freho           |
| 13.  | Ashanti     | Bosomtwe                  | Bosomtwe               |
| 14.  | Ashanti     | Ejisu Juaben Municipal    | Ejisu                  |
| 15.  | Ashanti     | Ejura Sekyedumase         | Ejura Sekyedumase      |
| 16.  | Ashanti     | Kwabre East               | Kwabre East            |
| 17.  | Ashanti     | Mampong Municipal         | Mampong                |
| 18.  | Ashanti     | Obuasi Municipal (Obuasi) | Obuasi West            |
| 19.  | Ashanti     | Offinso North             | Offinso North          |
| 20.  | Ashanti     | Oforikrom                 | Oforikrom              |
| 21.  | Ashanti     | Old Tafo                  | Old Tafo               |
| 22.  | Ashanti     | Sekyere Kumawu            | Kumawu                 |
| 23.  | Ashanti     | Suame                     | Suame                  |
| 24.  | Brong Ahafo | Asunafo North             | Asunafo North          |
| 25.  | Brong Ahafo | Asunafo South             | Asunafo South          |
| 26.  | Brong Ahafo | Asutifi South             | Asutifi South          |
| 27.  | Brong Ahafo | Atebubu/ Amantin          | Atebubu/Amantin        |
| 28.  | Brong Ahafo | Berekum Municipal         | Berekum East           |
| 29.  | Brong Ahafo | Dormaa Municipal          | Dormaa Central         |
| 30.  | Brong Ahafo | Jaman North               | Jaman North            |
| 31.  | Brong Ahafo | Kintampo South            | Kintampo South         |
| 32.  | Brong Ahafo | Nkoranza South            | Nkoranza South         |
| 33.  | Brong Ahafo | Sene West                 | Sene West              |
| 34.  | Brong Ahafo | Sunyani Municipal         | Sunyani East           |
| 35.  | Brong Ahafo | Tain                      | Tain                   |
| 36.  | Brong Ahafo | Tano North                | Tano North             |
| 37.  | Brong Ahafo | Tano South                | Tano South             |
| 38.  | Brong Ahafo | Wenchi                    | Wenchi                 |
| 39.  | Central     | Abura/Asebu/Kwamankese    | Abura/Asebu/Kwamankese |
| 40.  | Central     | Agona East                | Agona East             |
| 41.  | Central     | Agona West                | Agona West             |
| 42.  | Central     | Ajumako Enyan Esiam       | Ajumako Enyan Esiam    |
| 43.  | Central     | Asikuma Odoben Brakwa     | Asikuma/Odoben/Brakwa  |
| 44.  | Central     | Assin North               | Assin Central          |
| 45.  | Central     | Awutu Senya West          | Awutu Senya West       |
| 46.  | Central     | Cape Coast                | Cape Coast South       |
| 47.  | Central     | Effutu                    | Effutu                 |
| 48.  | Central     | Gomoa East                | Gomoa East             |
| 49.  | Central     | Mfantseman                | Mfantseman             |

|      |               |                      |                     |
|------|---------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 50.  | Central       | Upper Denkyira West  | Upper Denkyira West |
| 51.  | Eastern       | Afram Plains South   | Afram Plains South  |
| 52.  | Eastern       | Akwapim North        | Akwapim North       |
| 53.  | Eastern       | Asuogyaman           | Asuogyaman          |
| 54.  | Eastern       | Atiwa                | Atiwa East          |
| 55.  | Eastern       | Atiwa                | Atiwa West          |
| 56.  | Eastern       | Ayensuano            | Ayensuano           |
| 57.  | Eastern       | Birim North          | Abirem              |
| 58.  | Eastern       | Birim South          | Akim Swedru         |
| 59.  | Eastern       | Denkyembuo           | Akwatia             |
| 60.  | Eastern       | Fanteakwa            | Fanteakwa South     |
| 61.  | Eastern       | Kwaebibirem          | Kade                |
| 62.  | Eastern       | Kwahu South          | Mpraeso             |
| 63.  | Eastern       | Lower Manya Krobo    | Lower Manya Krobo   |
| 64.  | Eastern       | Suhum                | Suhum               |
| 65.  | Eastern       | Upper West Akim      | Upper West Akim     |
| 66.  | Greater Accra | Ablekuma             | Ablekuma Central    |
| 67.  | Greater Accra | Ablekuma             | Ablekuma North      |
| 68.  | Greater Accra | Ablekuma             | Ablekuma West       |
| 69.  | Greater Accra | Ashaiman             | Ashaiman            |
| 70.  | Greater Accra | Ayawaso              | Ayawaso East        |
| 71.  | Greater Accra | Ga East              | Dome/Kwabanya       |
| 72.  | Greater Accra | Ga South             | Weija/Gbawe         |
| 73.  | Greater Accra | Kpone Katamanso      | Kpone-Katamanso     |
| 74.  | Greater Accra | Ledzokuku Krowor     | Ledzokuku           |
| 75.  | Greater Accra | Osu Clottey          | Korle Klottey       |
| 76.  | Greater Accra | Shai-Osudoku         | Shai-Osudoku        |
| 77.  | Greater Accra | Tema                 | Tema-West           |
| 78.  | Northern      | Bole                 | Bole/Bamboi         |
| 79.  | Northern      | Bunkpurugu/Yunyoo    | Bunkpurugu          |
| 80.  | Northern      | Central Gonja        | Yapei-Kusawgu       |
| 81.  | Northern      | Chereponi            | Chereponi           |
| 82.  | Northern      | East Mamprusi        | Nalerigu/Gamgaba    |
| 83.  | Northern      | Karaga               | Karaga              |
| 84.  | Northern      | Kpandai              | Kpandai             |
| 85.  | Northern      | Mamprugu/Moagduri    | Yagaba/Kubori       |
| 86.  | Northern      | Mion                 | Mion                |
| 87.  | Northern      | Nanumba North        | Bimbilla            |
| 88.  | Northern      | Saboba               | Saboba              |
| 89.  | Northern      | Savelugu/Nanton      | Savelugu            |
| 90.  | Northern      | Tamale               | Tamale North        |
| 91.  | Northern      | Tatale/Sanguli       | Tatale/Sanguli      |
| 92.  | Northern      | Tolon                | Tolon               |
| 93.  | Northern      | West Mamprusi        | Walewale            |
| 94.  | Upper East    | Bawku Municipal      | Bawku Central       |
| 95.  | Upper East    | Bawku Municipal      | Binduri             |
| 96.  | Upper East    | Bolga                | Bolgatanga East     |
| 97.  | Upper East    | Bongo                | Bongo               |
| 98.  | Upper East    | Builsa North         | Builsa North        |
| 99.  | Upper East    | Builsa South         | Builsa South        |
| 100. | Upper East    | Kassena/Nankana West | Chiana/Paga         |
| 101. | Upper East    | Pusiga               | Pusiga              |
| 102. | Upper East    | Talensi              | Talensi             |
| 103. | Upper West    | Jirapa               | Jirapa              |
| 104. | Upper West    | Lambussie-Karni      | Lambussie-Karni     |
| 105. | Upper West    | Lawra                | Lawra               |

|      |            |                         |                      |
|------|------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 106. | Upper West | Wa East                 | Wa East              |
| 107. | Upper West | Wa Municipal            | Wa Central           |
| 108. | Upper West | Wa West                 | Wa West              |
| 109. | Volta      | Afadjato South          | Afadjato South       |
| 110. | Volta      | Biakoye                 | Biakoye              |
| 111. | Volta      | Central Tongu           | Central Tongu        |
| 112. | Volta      | Hohoe Municipal         | Hohoe                |
| 113. | Volta      | Kadjebi                 | Akan                 |
| 114. | Volta      | Keta                    | Keta                 |
| 115. | Volta      | Ketu North              | Ketu North           |
| 116. | Volta      | Ketu South              | Ketu South           |
| 117. | Volta      | Kpando Municipality     | Kpando               |
| 118. | Volta      | Krachi West             | Krachi West          |
| 119. | Volta      | Nkwanta North           | Nkwanta North        |
| 120. | Volta      | North Dayi              | North Dayi           |
| 121. | Volta      | North Tongu             | North Tongu          |
| 122. | Western    | Ahanta West             | Ahanta West          |
| 123. | Western    | Bia West District       | Bia West             |
| 124. | Western    | Effia-Kwesimintsim Sub  | Effia                |
| 125. | Western    | Ellembele               | Ellembele            |
| 126. | Western    | Jomoro                  | Jomoro               |
| 127. | Western    | Juaboso                 | Juaboso              |
| 128. | Western    | Nzema East Municipality | Evalue-Ajomoro-Gwira |
| 129. | Western    | Prestea/Huni-Valley     | Prestea Huni-Valley  |
| 130. | Western    | Sefwi Akontombra        | Sefwi Akontombra     |
| 131. | Western    | Takoradi Sub            | Takoradi             |
| 132. | Western    | Tarkwa Nsuaem           | Tarkwa Nsuaem        |
| 133. | Western    | Wassa Amenfi East       | Amenfi East          |
| 134. | Western    | Wassa East              | Wassa East           |