

DAILY

BULLETIN

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INEC SEEKS STAKEHOLDERS' CONTRIBUTIONS AS IT PRESENTS REVISED FRAMEWORK FOR IDP VOTING

Determined to ensure that no eligible Nigerian is left out of the electoral process on account of displacement, disability or other circumstances that may limit citizens' participation in the electoral process, the Independent National Electoral Commission has presented for validation a revised Framework and Regulations for Voting by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

It would be recalled that ahead of the 2015 General Election, the Commission introduced the voting IDPs, for this reason, a policy and framework designed by the Commission was revised and validated in 2018 for the 2019 General Election.

Speaking at a Stakeholder Validation meeting for the Revised Framework and Regulations for by IDPs, held in Abuja on Tuesday, Chairman of INEC, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu explained that what is presented to stakeholders today has taken into consideration several developments since the last review and validation exercise in 2018”.

“First, is the increased number of IDPs as a result of widespread insecurity nationwide. Secondly, to incorporate not only the displaced citizens arising from armed conflicts but also natural emergencies such as flooding. Thirdly, to align the framework with the provisions of the Electoral Act 2022, specifically Section 24(1) which empowers the Commission to ensure that, as far as practicable, no Nigerian is disenfranchised on account of displacement by emergency situations”.

“Finally, to align the framework with the national policy on internally displaced persons 2021”, he added.

Prof. Yakubu implored participants at the meeting which included; Community Leaders from communities with IDPs across the country, members of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES), Members of the Civil Society Community, and INEC Management staff from states with IDPs, to contribute towards enriching the document.

He said “I invite you all to contribute to the discussion at this validation meeting. What is presented to you is essentially a draft. We look forward to your input so that working together, we can enrich the framework as well as the regulations for voting by IDPs. Beyond the validation of the document, we also look forward to a robust collaboration with stakeholders for voter education and sensitisation of IDPs.”

In a goodwill message, the House of Representatives Committee Chairperson on Electoral Matters, Hon. Aishatu Jibril Dukku, noted that the policy document proposed by INEC to guide the conduct of IDPs voting operations and bring the IDP communities into the voting population, is worth applauding and deserves support from all.

She emphasized the need to also improve on the framework and the Regulations and Guidelines for Voting by Internally Displaced Persons which will drive IDP voting operations for the 2023 General Elections.

Hon. Dukku urged the Commission to draw lessons from the 2015 and 2019 experience and also consult with other knowledge holders at state and national levels, with a view to implementing the IDP voting Framework based on International best practice. According to her, “that will ensure that the framework document and the Regulations and Guidelines, are grounded on practical realities”.

The Country Director for the International Foundation for Electoral System (IFES). Seray Jah, assured that his organization remained willing and ready to support the Commission in the successful implementation of the Framework and Regulations for Voting by IDPs.

He said “INEC should be assured of our readiness to continually partner with the Commission in achieving its mission of serving as an independent and effective Election Management Body committed to conducting free, fair, and credible elections for sustainable democracy in Nigeria”.

CLAIMS & OBJECTIONS: WE’LL SOON DISPLAY COMPREHENSIVE REGISTER OF VOTERS FOR 2023 GENERAL ELECTION NATIONWIDE - INEC CHAIRMAN

Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Mahmood Yakubu has said that the Commission plans to display the Register of voters to be used for the 2023 General Election nationwide for claims and objection as soon as it completes the ongoing Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) to weed out all double/multiple as well as ineligible registrants.

He made the disclosure while clarifying an allegation that the Commission failed to display the Register of Voters as provided by law, during a Stakeholder Validation meeting for the Revised Framework and Regulations by IDPs, held in Abuja on Tuesday.

Making the clarification, the INEC Chairman said “it has become necessary to make an important clarification in respect of a statement attributed to a section of the Civil Society Organisations. At a media briefing yesterday, the Commission

was accused of failure to display the Register of Voters as provided by Section 19(1) of the Electoral Act 2022. This claim is incorrect”.

Prof. Yakubu explained that “what the Commission displayed for claims and objections in our Local Government Area offices nationwide for a period of one week, from 15th – 21st August 2022, was not the entire register of voters but the list of fresh registrants at the end of the Fourth and last quarter of the Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise covering the period from 11th April – 31st July 2022”.

He continued: “this has been the practice for several years. Earlier, the Commission had displayed the register three times: 24th – 30th September 2021 (First Quarter), 24th – 30th December 2021 (Second Quarter) and 26th March – 1st April 2022 (Third Quarter). A comprehensive schedule of the CVR exercise and the display of the register was shared with stakeholders at our quarterly meeting just before the inception of the exercise in June last year”.

Assuring that a nationwide display is underway, the Chairman said “we wish to assure Nigerians that the Commission will display the comprehensive register in all the 8,809 Wards and 774 Local Government Areas/Area Councils nationwide as envisaged in Section 19(1) of the Electoral Act 2022”.

“This will integrate fresh voters registered under the last CVR exercise to the existing register of over 84 million voters. The date will be announced as soon as the Commission completes the ongoing Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) to weed out all double/multiple as well as ineligible registrants. We appeal to some of our friends in civil society to be guided accordingly”, he added.

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