FRAMEWORK AND REGULATIONS FOR VOTING BY INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs)

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In response, INEC’s engagement with IDP voting has moved from ad hoc and reactive activity to a planned programme involving all the relevant stakeholders in Nigeria’s electoral democracy. This is evident in the continuous review of the policy framework for IDP voting and the accompanying regulations in each electoral cycle.

It is noteworthy that IDP voting has been driven by the Commission’s vision as contained in the Strategic Plans. The Commission’s vision is to be one of the best Election Management Bodies (EMBs) in the world. Furthermore, the Strategic Plan, 2022-2026 commits INEC to conduct elections that not only accord with the existing standards of free, fair and credible elections; but elections that are inclusive of Nigerian citizens regardless of their physical locations, Persons with Disability and other considerations that could limit their participation in the electoral process as voters. In addition to the existing global instruments on IDP participation in the electoral process, the adoption of the National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons in 2021 has made it even more incumbent on the Commission to make IDP voting a matter of implementing a national mandate.

The present policy framework logically builds on the first policy framework used for IDP voting in the 2015 general election, the operational scope of which was improved on in 2018 titled “INEC Framework for Voting by IDPs 2018”, used for IDP voting in the 2019 general election. The 2018 policy framework was accompanied with “Regulations for IDP Voting” which eased the implementation of the framework. Furthermore, the review process has benefitted from the relevant provisions of Electoral Act 2022, including the provisions relating deployment of technology for voter accreditation and results transmission. It has also benefitted from the provisions that seek to make voting more friendly to community of Persons with Disability, visibly pregnant women and the aged, among others.

The Commission’s efforts to promote IDP voting reflects the continued commitment to respond to the concerns of citizens to make Nigeria’s electoral processes more open and transparent, and for the Commission to internalize lessons learnt from previous elections in undertaking more agile preparations for the subsequent elections.

I would like to thank INEC staff drawn from across the hierarchies to support this review process which has been accomplished within a short time as well as IFES whose support has been critical in reviewing the framework. I look forward to the faithful implementation of this framework and to a successful 2023 general election in which Nigeria realizes the dream of a fair, credible and more inclusive electoral outcome.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2022 Framework for voting by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) is a product of the comprehensive review of the 2018 policy used for IDP voting in the 2019 general election. The 19-member Inter-Agency Technical Committee charged with the task of reviewing this framework worked assiduously to accomplish the task within the short period given by the Commission. It is therefore normal to acknowledge the contributions of individuals and organizations who have made this possible.

We profusely acknowledge the leadership of the Commission for remaining focused on the mandate and vision of the Commission, especially the vision to conduct elections that are free, fair and inclusive. We particularly acknowledge the steering role of the Chairman of the Technical Committee, Dr. Baba Bila, a National Commissioner and other National Commissioners who were members of the Committee. They are: Prof. Kunle Ajayi and Professor Rhoda Gumus whose attendance of committee meetings and deliberations provided enormous fillip to the other committee members and supporting staff of the Commission.

In addition to the Chairman of the Committee and two National Commissioners, we deeply acknowledge Resident Electoral Commissioners whose membership of the Committee was informed by the significant presence of IDPs in their States and who provided the rare insights that guided the work of the Committee. They include Professor Samuel Egwu (Niger), Professor Saidu A. Babura (Zamfara), Barrister Kassim Gaidam Adamawa), Dr. Cyril Omorogbe (Cross River), and Dr. (Mrs) Asma’u S. Maikudi (Kaduna). The Administrative Secretary of Benue State, Shehu Abdulwahab made no less important contribution to the review process is also appreciated.
We equally acknowledge the team of advisers to the Honourable Chairman of the Commission, especially Professors Bolade Eyinla and Mohammed Kuna, the Chief Technical Adviser and Special Assistance, respectively. They have been of valuable assistance to the Committee.

Worthy of special acknowledgement is the Secretary of the Commission, Mrs. Rose Oriaran-Anthony, who not only provided the Secretariat for the assignment of the Committee but provided the necessary tools and logistics support that facilitated the entire work of the Committee. In the same vein, the invaluable contributions of the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Chima Duruaku, need to be singled out, particularly for not only coordinating and organizing the work of the Committee, but also for giving coherence to this policy framework.

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the continued support of Nigeria’s development partners, especially The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) for supporting the Commission in the development of this framework.

Finally, the Committee is grateful to the Chairman INEC, Professor Mahmood Yakubu, for sustaining the reformist disposition of the Commission and giving the members of the Committee the opportunity to serve in this capacity.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU - African Union
BVAS - BiModal Voter Accreditation System
CBOs - Community Based Organizations
CD - Compact Disk
CSOs - Civil Society Organizations
CVR - Continuous Voter Registration
EC 8A - Election Result Sheet at PU level
EC8B - Election Result Sheet at RA level
EC8D - Election Result Sheet at State Level
EL - Electoral Logistics
EM - Election Management
EMB - Electoral Management Body
EMBs - Electoral Management Bodies
EOLC - Electoral Operations and Logistics Committee
EOPs - Electoral Operations
EP - Electoral Process
ERM - Election Risk Management
EVMAT - Election Violence Mitigation and Advocacy Tools
ICCES - Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security
ICT - Information and Communication Technology
IDP - Internally Displaced Person
IDPs - Internally Displaced Persons
IDP-VC - Technical Committee on IDP Voting
IFES - International Foundation for Electoral Systems
INEC - Independent National Electoral Commission
IREV - INEC Result Viewing Portal
IVED - INEC Voter Enrolment Device
LGA - Local Government Area
MDAs - Ministries Departments and Agencies
NEMA - National Emergency Management Agency
NOA - National Orientation Agency
OPC - Outreach and Publicity Committee
PM&SC - Planning Monitoring and Strategy Committee
PU - Polling Unit
PVC - Permanent Voter Card
PWD - Persons with Disability
RA - Registration Area
REC - Resident Electoral Commissioner
RV - Register of Voters
SA - Special Adviser
SCR - Smart Card Reader
SEMA - State Emergency Management Agency
SMS - Short Messaging Services
SOE - States of Emergency
TOR - Terms of Reference
TV - Television
UN - United Nations
VEP - Voter Education and Publicity
VR - Voter Registry
INTRODUCTION

In 2018, the Commission in keeping with its Vision to be one of the best Election Management Bodies (EMBs) in the world reviewed and expanded the operational scope of the IDP Voting template used for the 2015 General Election in the then States of Emergency (SOE) in the North Eastern States of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. The expanded program supported with the INEC Framework for Voting by IDPs 2018 came into force along with the Regulations for IDP Voting which served as operational guides for easy implementation of the programme. The key element of the 2018 effort was the availability of a clear legal provision contained in the now repealed Electoral act 2010, as amended by way of section 26 (1) which stipulated that: “In the event of an emergency affecting an election, the Commission shall, as far as possible, ensure that persons displaced as a result of the emergency are not disenfranchised”.

The Framework was successfully implemented during the 2019 General Election in the entire country and also covered cases of displacement due to natural disasters, as opposed to the 2015 template which covered only areas affected by insurgency. And now, the Commission in its resolve to actualize the Mission Statement which is: “to serve as an independent and effective EMB committed to the conduct of free, fair, credible and inclusive elections for sustainable democracy in Nigeria”, then set up a Special Technical Committee chaired by a National Commissioner and composed of other members, some of whom had participated in the drawing up of the initial IDP framework and Regulations of 2018, to review and update these policy and regulatory instruments. It has become imperative to review the framework in the light of the following:
Enactment of the Electoral Act 2022

Release of the Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections, 2022

Publication of the INEC Strategic Plan 2022-2026

Approval of the Election Project Plan for the 2023 General Elections

The commitment of the Commission to further strengthen inclusivity within the IDP Voting Camps/Centers by ensuring that Persons with Disability enjoy improved voter experience during elections

Requests and appeals by stakeholders for continuity of the IDP Voting Policy

Application of new technology and;

The need to demonstrate commitment to international treaties and conventions

Against the foregoing background, the interagency Special Technical Review Committee drew lessons from the 2015 and 2019 experiences that will not only sustain the gains already made, but improve upon them and institutionalize the model for other Election Management Bodies (EMBs) to emulate.

In arriving at the key items of review, the technical committee consulted widely and shared experiences with knowledge holders in order to birth a robust revision of the Framework for Voting by IDPs that can be of general application within the country and also meet the standard of international best practice.

Consequently, the revised INEC Framework on Voting by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) is a policy document proposed to guide the conduct of IDP voting operations and afford the IDP communities, as well as Persons with Disability in IDP communities the opportunity to vote. Accompanying the framework is the revised Regulations for Voting by Internally Displaced Persons which will drive IDP voting operations for the 2023 General Election.
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This policy framework is undergirded by the following principles:

1. The overarching principle embedded in the Commission’s mission to serve as an independent and effective EMB committed to the conduct of free, fair, credible and inclusive elections for sustainable democracy in Nigeria.

2. The national commitment to recognize and protect the rights of IDPs and citizens of the country as enshrined in the National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria (2021).

3. Nigeria’s commitment to international and regional instruments and conventions committing to the rights of IDPs, including the United Nations’ Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the African Union’s Convention for the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (the Kampala Convention) and;

4. The need to bring the policy framework and regulations in line with the Electoral Act, 2022, as well as the Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections, 2022.
ELEMENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK

Pre-Operational Planning for IDP Voting

**Required Actions**

**i. Identify and Classify IDPs by Location**
For ease of operation, IDPs that will participate in elections should be identified and classified on the basis of location namely, Intrastate and Interstate. Intrastate IDPs refer to the internally displaced within a state, and Interstate IDPs refer to the internally displaced but hosted in another state.

**ii. Determine Election Category**
Intrastate IDPs shall participate in all election categories when and where applicable while Interstate IDPs shall only participate in presidential elections in order to limit the challenges associated with political perception and suspicion over transmission of results across state borders and constituency boundaries.

**iii. Make Special Arrangements for Voting by Persons with Disability:**
Deliberate effort shall be made to implement special arrangements to aid Persons with Disability, visibly pregnant women, nursing or breast-feeding mothers and the elderly, and also grant them priority access to voting at voting centers. Visually impaired voters, may use assistive voting devices where available.

**iv. Collaborate with other RECs**
Collaboration between the Resident Electoral Commissioners (RECs) of affected States with shared IDP populations will be required for Interstate IDPs. This is critical to the synergy of exchange of information and electoral resources required for a successful interstate IDP voting.

**v. Conduct Survey of IDPs**
RECs of affected states are required to conduct a survey to establish the status of IDPs in their states. The objectives of the survey will be to identify the location of IDPs and their demographics; determine the condition of IDP camps; identify the IDPs who are registered voters and possess the Permanent Voters Card (PVC).

**vi. Organize IDPs by Delimitation Details**
To maintain alignment of IDP voting with their constituencies and delimitation, RECs of affected states are to organize IDP voters according to delimitation details. In implementing this, deliberate efforts shall be made to avoid duplication of RAS/PUs to prevent voters from voting twice in a particular election.
vii. Template for IDP Voting Data
States / FCT offices of INEC are required to organize IDP voting information, and the identification of IDP voting centres using the template for IDP voting data instrument titled IDP Voter Data Matrix, for RA, LGA, State and National levels.

viii. Conduct Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) at IDP camps
Commission is to make arrangements to ensure that IDP camps are covered during the Commission’s CVR exercises, to register IDPs who are eligible to register.

ix. Make Available Permanent Voter Card (PVC) for Collection
Special arrangements for the collection or distribution of PVCs at IDP camps are to be made by RECs of affected states. For Interstate PVC distribution, the RECs of the host state and the state of voter registration of the IDPs are to collaborate in consultation with stakeholders to determine an efficient modality for collection.

x. Continuous Mapping, Tracking and Reporting on IDP population:
A mechanism for the continuous tracking and reporting of the population of displaced persons in camps is to be implemented to map changes in IDP demographics, considering the rate of IDPs returning to their place of habitual residence because of improved safety conditions, or increase in IDPs as a result of worsening situations. This would make it possible for a more accurate number of IDP voters to be established at any given time.

xi. Deploy ERM / EVMAT Tools
Electoral risk management tools are to be deployed to assess the potential risks and threat levels associated with conducting elections in the identified IDP voting centres and IDP camps. This is critical for planning and successful conduct of the exercise. Regular collaboration with members of ICCES and other stakeholders is to be pursued to assess the above tools and adapt them to suit the peculiarities of each IDP voting Centre in the respective States and FCT.

xii. Undertake Readiness Assurance Tests
The programme / template for measuring levels of preparedness should cover IDP voting operations. Accordingly, monitoring tools and processes of the election monitoring and support centre should take IDP voting into account.
Required Actions

i. Create Voting Centres
Voting centres may be located at IDP camps or at centralized locations outside IDP camps. RECs of affected states are to closely engage stakeholders to decide on suitable locations to be used for this purpose. The criteria for selection of centres shall include considerations for general safety, environmental safety and availability of facilities such as schools and police stations. In the case of partially displaced communities, voting is to take place at a voting centre sited at a location most suitable for those who did not flee and those displaced. Voting centres for Interstate IDP voting may be implemented where population displacements affect entire registered voters at PU, RA, or LGA, provided that there shall not be a duplication of PUs within and across state boundaries.

ii. Emphasise Voting Procedure
Voting for IDPs will be conducted on PU basis. Where deemed required, additional units of the BVAS may be deployed to a PU to manage congestion.

iii. Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS)
The BVAS to be utilized for IDP voting will be configured to PU level only.

iv. Undertake Collation and Result Management Modifications
Collation and Result Management for IDP voting will follow the Commission’s standard collation procedures. Electronic Result transmission and Upload of results procedures will also be applied for IDP voting. For Interstate IDP voting, results shall be transmitted and uploaded to the designated INEC Portal (IReV) in line with the provisions of the Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections 2022.

v. Determine Election Officials and Security Deployment Disposition
The standard election staff disposition for conducting elections shall apply to IDP voting centres. Additional provision is to be made for RA guides and signages at the voting centres. The guides are to assist voters in locating their points of voting within the centres. Special security arrangements are to be made for IDP voting including military presence at the periphery of voting and collation centres. Engagement with ICCES to determine the strategy for security deployment for IDP voting is required. Deployment of police to be on the basis of 2 police officers per polling unit. Emphasis is to be placed on assessing the security requirements on a case-by-case basis.
vi. Maintain Result Transmission Protocol
The transmission of election results for IDP voting shall follow the normal transmission procedures using the form EC8 series and the electronic result transmission procedures.

Engagement with Stakeholders, Persons with Disability, and Others
Engagement with stakeholders is an important part of public communication on IDP voting. The aim of the engagement is to sensitize and inform stakeholders on the modalities for IDP voting, mobilization on related issues, and to synergize on issues such as location of IDP voting centres.

Required Actions
i. Identify Key Stakeholders
The stakeholder entities include security agencies; political parties; traditional rulers and community leaders; religious leaders around IDP camps; National and State Emergency Management Agencies; the media; Community Based Organizations (CBOs); State and Local Governments; National Orientation Agency; women groups; schools; and IDP leadership structure.

ii. Engage Stakeholders
Engagement with stakeholders on IDP voting is to be held at National, State, LGA and IDP camp levels.

Voter Education and Publicity for IDP Voting
In addition to voter education and publicity methods deployed to reach the general public, specific initiatives and strategies shall be adopted to reach IDPs. The purpose of publicity for IDP voting include:
1. Making basic information about participating in elections available and accessible
2. Achieving universal coverage of all segments of the IDP voter population
3. Strengthening democratic values
4. Robust programmes to sensitize IDPs
5. Enabling IDPs to make informed choices

Required Actions
The following publicity measures are to be adopted in order to achieve effective communication with IDPs:

i. Conduct Direct Communication
Production of Specific Audio and Visual Messages such as jingles of durations ranging from 30 to 60 seconds; docudramas specifically for radio; short documentaries of between 15-30 minutes on thematic areas such as the right to vote, voting procedures, discouraging vote trading; and direct communication with the IDPs.
ii. Air Messages
Dissemination of Messages via radio, television, viewing centres at the camps, CDs and cine-rovers should be adopted

iii. Use of INEC Publicity Materials
Production of INEC publicity materials such as posters, fliers, banners and stickers on various aspects of the election including materials relating to Persons with Disability will be undertaken.

iv. Conduct Sensitization Fora in collaboration with CSOs, CBOs and Organized Groups of Persons with Disability.
Special sensitisation and enlightenment fora are to be organised in each IDP camp by RECs of affected states in collaboration with CSOs, CBOs and Persons with Disability groups before the conduct of elections, utilizing the media of drama, theatre, indigenous music, talks and so on. The fora content is to address the importance of participating/voting; collection of PVCs; safekeeping of PVCs; basic facts about date, time and types of election; right to vote; voting procedure; election offences such as buying and selling of votes; plans by INEC to make votes count; special sensitization forum for women; special sensitization forum for youth groups and Persons with Disability

v. Conduct Voter Education in Local Languages
Voter education campaigns in languages widely spoken by the IDPs is to be implemented.

vi. Deploy Social / New Media Tools
Social media handles of INEC are to be deployed in communicating voter education and publicity messages to IDPs.

vii. Partner with Stakeholders
Collaborating with IDP leadership, community and religious leaders in voter education initiatives and programs is critical for a successful engagement.
Budget Template for IDP Voting

The budget template for IDP voting shall follow the standard election budgeting template with supplementary provision for specific IDP voting requirements, with greater emphasis on INEC State office leading.

**Required Actions**

i. Provide for stakeholder’s engagement  
ii. Provide for special publicity  
iii. Provide for signage for RAs and PUs  
iv. Provide for local guides on the basis of two (2) per RA  
v. Provide for Security per voting centre on the basis of two (2) per PU  
vi. Provide for special security at perimeters of voting, and designated movement corridors for IDP voters  
vii. Provide for assistive devices for Persons with Disability

Monitoring and Evaluation

**Required Actions**

i. Feedback on Implementation  
RECs of affected states are to report on the implementation of the programme.

ii. Debrief RECs  
Commission is to carry out a debrief exercise for RECs of all affected states and LGAs to evaluate implementation and learn lessons.

iii. Debrief of Monitors  
Commission is to undertake the de-brief of election supervisors and monitors on monitoring and service compact.
Reference to:
REGULATIONS FOR IDP VOTING, 2022

This Framework document derives from the Regulations for IDP Voting 2022. The Regulations will guide the IDP voting operations for 2023 and other applicable elections thereafter.

The Regulation document details the specific steps to take in executing an IDP voting program in any part of the country taking into account the flexibility required for peculiarities.
REGULATIONS FOR VOTING BY INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs)
Revised 2022
REGULATIONS FOR VOTING BY INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs)

[Short title: Regulations for IDP Voting]

1.0 PREAMBLE
Pursuant to the powers conferred on the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) (hereafter referred to as the Commission) by Section 15 (a) (1) of the Third Schedule to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 as amended, Sections 24 (1) and 47 (1)&(2) of the Electoral Act 2022, and in conformity with international treaties and conventions on promoting inclusivity, the Commission hereby issues the following Regulations for Voting by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). These Regulations are issued as Independent National Electoral Commission Decision Extract No. .... of ...., 2022.

1.1 Definition of IDPs: Internally Displaced Persons under this Regulations are qualified Nigerian voters who have relocated temporarily or permanently from their places of habitual residence as a result of conflict, insecurity or other natural or man-made emergencies and so are unable to vote in their normal delimitation/polling locations.

1.2 Classification of IDPs by Location: There shall be broad classification for IDPs identified on basis of location namely, Intrastate and Interstate. Whereas intrastate IDP refers to those internally displaced within a state, Interstate IDP refers to the internally displaced but hosted in a state other than their state of habitual residence.

1.3 Voting by Persons with Disability and Vulnerable Persons: Polling locations in IDP Camps/ Voting Centers shall be located in places easily accessible to Persons with Disability, vulnerable persons and those with special needs. Assistance shall be extended to them at the polling location by the provision of suitable means of communication and assistive voting devices and procedures that may be available.

1.4 Election Category: For intrastate IDP voting, displaced persons can participate and vote in all elections, undertaken and supervised by the Commission using their PVCs after which collation and transmission of the results will be implemented in accordance with the Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections 2022. For interstate IDP voting, displaced persons can participate and vote in only the presidential election using their PVCs after which collation and transmission of the results will be implemented in accordance with the Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections, 2022.

1.5 Delimitation: State / FCT offices of INEC shall carry out IDP surveys and organize IDPs according to their delimitation in collaboration with stakeholders, provided that there shall be no duplication of any polling unit, so that a voter may not vote twice.
1.6 Continuous Voter Registration (CVR): INEC State / FCT offices are to undertake Continuous Voter Registration to cover IDPs at their locations.

1.7 Distribution of PVCs: Arrangements for distribution and collection of PVCs at the IDP camps and other designated points shall be made by the State / FCT offices.

1.8 Establishment of IDP Voting Centres: INEC shall, in consultation with ICCES and stakeholders, establish IDP Voting Centres at registered and recognized IDP camps and other suitable locations where displaced persons will vote during elections.

1.9 Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS): The INEC voter accreditation device also known as the BVAS shall be configured to the PU level only

1.10 Use of PVC for Voting: Voting at the IDP Centers shall be with the use of Permanent Voter Card (PVC) only, as is applicable in all Polling Units throughout the country.

1.11 Register of Voters: Intrastate IDP Register of Voters shall be the standard Register of Voters, while for Interstate IDPs the Register of Voters shall be for only the affected PU/RA/LGA as the case may be.

1.12 Security: The Commission shall collaborate with security agencies in developing special security arrangements for IDP voting operations.

1.13 Result Transmission: Transmission of results at IDP voting Centers shall be based on the standard transmission procedures approved by the Commission.

1.14 Logistics Arrangement: Existing logistics arrangement for deployment and retrieval of election staff and materials may be modified for implementation at the IDP voting Centers, in such a way that additional funding may be made for reverse logistics in respect of interstate IDP voting.

1.15 Engagement with Stakeholders: Stakeholder engagement shall be at four (4) strategic levels namely national, state, LGA and IDP camps.

1.16 Partnership for Voter Education: Partnership with the Commission on voter education shall be based on clear sets of criteria provided by the Commission to ensure capacity, professionalism and competence.

1.17 Application of the Regulations for Voting by Internally Displaced Persons: These regulations shall be applicable to voting at IDP camps or voting centres. Any appendix to these Regulations shall constitute an integral part of the Regulations guiding IDP voting. This Revised Regulations on IDP Voting 2022 shall be an integral part of the Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections, 2022 as supplementary regulations or as may be defined by the Commission.