

ICT and Elections

THEMATIC WORKSHOP

Information Technology and Elections Management Informed Decisions for Sustainable Outcomes

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SUBTITLE

•The Effect of Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT)

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Outline:

- Explain what a PVT is, its practices and basic facts of it?
- PVT: What are its Benefits?
- PVT and Post-Election Violence?
- EMBs and PVT?
- Conclusion



PVT: What is it?

- PVT is an advanced form of a domestic election day observation project;
- PVT uses statistical principles to deploy observers and report on the quality of the electoral process;
- PVT allows for the verification of the accuracy of the total valid vote count as may be declared by an electoral management body (EMB).



PVT: What is it?

- PVT observers transmit the recorded data by way of specially formatted mobile text messaging (SMS) to a computer database at a central location;
- Thus, combined with ICT, PVT provides a more timely, precise, scientific, systematic and representative information on the conduct of elections and vote count.



The PVT?

- *PVT combines Statistical Principles and Technology (Mobile Phone) in enhancing the transparency, credibility, and integrity of the electoral process, including results management*



PVT Practices:

- The genesis of PVT is traced to the Philippines in 1986 where the National Citizens Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) employed the technique for the first time;
- In Africa, the PVT has recently been implemented in Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Kenya, and recently in Nigeria.



PVT: Basic Facts

- Uses statistical principles to deploy observers;
- Deploys observers to a nationally representative random sample of polling stations;
- Uses ICT tools, in particular SMS, to rapidly transmit observation reports;
- Evaluates the overall quality of the conduct of polling processes;



PVT: Basic Facts

- Not exit polling; instead PVT records the actual vote count as announced by the EMB polling officials at the polling stations;
- Makes reliable and scientific projections based on the aggregated official vote counts from a nationally representative sampled polling stations;
- PVT undertakers do not announce results/do not seek to usurp the mandate of EMBs



Benefits of PVT:

- Contributes to reducing extreme tensions associated with elections;
- Provides an effective tool to assess the quality of the electoral process (in a representative manner);
- Enables a reduction or curtailment of electoral malfeasance on election day by having observers stationed at their polling stations;



Benefits of PVT

- Its ability to estimate official results through scientific process enables election observation bodies to verify the accuracy of the official results as declared by EMBs
- In fact, if EMBs do their work professionally, in all cases a well mounted PVT and the official results should, to a large extent, converge as shown in the tables below:



Ghana Elections 2008: Round 1

Candidate	Party	PVT Estimate	Margin of Error	Official EC Results
Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo	NPP	49.8	±1.6	49.1
Prof. John Evans Atta Mills	NDC	47.4	±1.6	47.9
Dr. Paa Kwesi Nduom	CPP	1.3	±0.1	1.3
Dr. Edward Nasigrie Mahama	PNC	0.8	±0.2	0.9
Emmanuel Ansah-Antwi	DFP	0.3	±0.0	0.3
Kwesi Amofo-Yeboah	Independent	0.2	±0.1	0.2
Kwabena Adjei	RDP	0.1	±0.0	0.1
Thomas Ward Brew	DPP	0.1	±0.0	0.1

Note: PVT estimate range is based on a 95% confidence level.



Ghana Elections 2008: Round 2

Candidate	Political Party	PVT Margin of Error	PVT Estimated Results (%)	EC Official Results (%)
Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo	NPP	±1.7	49.81	49.87
Prof. John Evans Atta Mills	NDC	±1.7	50.19	50.13



Nigeria Elections 2011

Table 1: Swift Count Presidential Elections Estimates with Official Results

Political Party	Swift Count Estimate	Margin of Error	Swift Count Range	Official INEC Result
PDP	58.7%	+/- 1.2	57.5% to 59.9%	58.9%
CPC	30.8%	+/-1.2	29.6% to 32.0%	32.0%
CAN	5.3%	+/-0.3	5.0% to %5.6	5.4%
ANPP	2.7%	+/-0.3	2.4% to 3.0%	2.4%



Benefits of PVT

- The principal objective of PVT is to promote trust and confidence in the electoral processes, and assures voters that their votes are well protected and significant in the determination of who becomes their leader*



PVT and Post-Election Violence

- ***Can PVT help Prevent Post-Electoral Violence?***



PVT and Post-election Violence

- SMS text-messaging technology helps to quickly relay information about threats of or real acts of violence;
- PVT seeks to deter and detect fraud in official vote tally as announced by EMBs;
- PVT is able to provide greater confidence in the official results as declared by EMBs, and general acceptance.



PVT and Post-election Violence

- ***Can PVT Trigger Post-electoral violence?***



PVT and Post-election Violence

- If the methodology is not properly designed to ensure nationally representative sample, the PVT projections will largely be biased;
- Inaccurate data transmitted by observers, be it intentional or unintentional, can bias the PVT projections;
- If PVT data management is politicized, not kept confidential, and conducted in a manner that takes over the authority of the EMB



PVT and EMBs

- ***Should Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) conduct PVT?***



PVT and EMBs

- Given the nature of EMBs, their operational structures and the level of bureaucracy, it would be very cumbersome;
- Can EMBs keep the PVT data confidential prior to the conclusion of the overall vote tallying?;
- EMBs to stay off PVT and avoid being judges over their own credibility and integrity;



PVT and EMBs

- EMBs should rather encourage credible civic groups to undertake PVT by giving them the necessary support;
- EMBs must rather ensure that the group implementing PVT has the technical competence and credibility in election observation;
- EMBs should consider it an exercise aimed at enhancing and reinforcing their integrity



Conclusion

- Useful component of election observation exercise; the ICT aspect of it allows citizens' group to report timely;
- Offers the opportunity for timely forecast of returns and results;
- Allows for systematic nation-wide evaluation on the conduct of the polls;



Conclusion

- However, PVT is not full proof or the silver bullet to electoral integrity and peaceful electoral outcomes;
 - Unable to address organizational/logistical challenges that confront EMBs on polling days;
 - Cannot address comprehensive rigging and fraud, and
 - Cannot be the antidote to poor security situation on polling day.



Conclusion

- *Thus, PVT must be viewed as one of the many reinforcing tools that contribute to electoral integrity and election peace.*

