

Overview of Current Results Management



3. Overview of Current Results Management System

The results management system consists of 5 main stages:-

- i. Counting
- ii. Verification and compilation
- iii. Transfer of results
- iv. District office activities
- v. National Tally Center/Final Results



OVERVIEW OF CURRENT RESULTS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

i. Counting

- In accordance with the law, counting of the votes for each polling station is done at that polling station immediately after the close of polling
- At the conclusion of polling the Presiding Officer seals ballot boxes and prepares the polling station for the count
- All preparation and counting are done in the presence party and candidates agents as well as observers (local and international)



Overview of Current Results Management System (cont.)

- At the conclusion of the count the PO completes all documentation, including the **Presiding Officer Ballot Paper Reconciliation Form**
- The Po also completes the **Polling Station Results Forms** (which is the results by candidate for each election)
- Copies of each PS Results Form are prepared for :-
 - Display at the PS
 - Transfer to the District Electoral Office
 - Transfer to the National Tally Center



ii. Results Verification and Compilation

- Polling Center Manager checks all documentation, makes corrections where necessary with relevant polling station Presiding Officer, and in full view of party and candidates agents and observers
- The PCM completes a summary of the results from all stations in the center in the **Polling Center Return Sheet**, for the different elections. These compiled results are also displayed at the polling center.
- The polling station results and the polling center returns are provisional results. Results can only be final after they have been verified and tallied at the National Tally Center at the Commission's headquarters in Freetown, and certified by the National Returning Officer.



iii. Transfer of Results

- Copies of the Presiding Officer Ballot Paper Reconciliation Form, Polling Station Results Form (for each election), and Polling Center Return Sheet (for each election) are packaged into 2 Tamper Evident Envelopes (TEE) -1 copy for the District and 1 for the Tally Center. These TEEs are collected by the Constituency Election Monitor
- Without opening any of the TEEs the CEM deposits the TEEs at the District Office. 1 TEE is retained at the District Office and 1 brought to the National Tally Center, by the District Office.
- The DEO retains 1 TEE for each polling center at the District Office and brings the other TEE to the National Tally Center



iv. District Office Activities

- The DEO carefully stores all TEEs and electoral materials received in a safe and secure location
- The DEO will not open any TEEs or ballot boxes unless under instructions from the National Returning Officer



Brief Technical Description of the Current Hardware and Software at the NTC

- The following is a brief description of the ICT hardware & software used in the current results management system:
- 6 servers - 2 Domain Controllers – 1 Primary Domain Controller & 1 Back-up Domain Controller;
- 2 Database Servers- 1 Main or Primary and 1 Back-up Server to ensure Data Security.
- 35 desktop computers for the Data Entry and other Processing
- the results application is client-server and windows based,
- the back-end database is Microsoft SQL Server 2005
- The system was developed in-house, by UNDP IT TA Team using Visual Basic 2005 and Visual Studio 2005.



v. National Results Tally

- Shipment Receiving : The results from all polling stations for all elections are received at the National Tally Center
- Batch Preparation : Once a TEE arrives at the Tally Center, it is logged, sorted and then the results from each of the polling stations will be logged into the Results Database, under the supervision of the Commissioner in charge of the region (Regional Returning Officer), and in the presence of candidates agents and observers
- Data Entry : The Data Entry Station will be responsible for entering data into the result database



v. National Results Tally (cont.)

- Duplicate Entry-In order to reduce the data entry errors, a second entry of each result was done by different staff
- Forms Review and Correction- Entries of Both *Data Entry* and *Duplicate Entry* are verified to ensure consistency



V. National Results Tally (cont.).

Results from the various centres are entered into the main result database through a user interface . The result system comprises of 7 steps:

1. Shipment Receiving:-it simply collects and verify all the centre results from the pooling centres.
2. Batch Preparation:- Here, Results sheets from the field are verified by the staff



V. National Results Tally (cont.)

3. **Data Entry** : The Data Entry Station enters the data into the result database.

4. **Duplicate Entry**: In order to reduce the data entry errors, a second entry of each result is done by different staff.

5. **Forms Review and Correction**: Entries of both *Data Entry* and *Duplicate Entry* are verified to ensure consistency.



V. National Results Tally (cont.)

6. *Quality Control:* All entries are again verified and the result sent to the last stage.

7. *Archive:* This station will be tasked to verify that all the results from a center have passed through all the above stages.



VI. Final National Results

Results Generations and Announcement

- Following conclusion of the tally and any investigations or decisions by the NEC, the NTC will produce the **Final National Results**, for all the elections, by polling station and by polling center
- These results are only officially released after certification by the National Returning Officer



Advantages

- The system is able to track and correct errors.
- There is an audit trail of users' activities.
- There is some level of local ownership
- Party Agents and Observers can do an audit trail and therefore verify official final results



Disadvantages

- Due to lack of skilled personnel, expatriates were employed to provide technical assistance. When they left, national staff faced problems of adapting the software to generate results for subsequent bye-elections
- There was delay in releasing results since the system was centralized in Freetown.
- Security of results was threatened since the results passed through so many hands.



Proposed Result System

The results for the forth coming elections will be tallied at two Levels:

- 1. The Regional Level-** This will handle results for the Local Council and parliamentary elections.
- 2. National Level:** This will handle results for the Presidential elections.

Provisional results will be announced at both levels, but final Results will be announced by the Chief Electoral commissioner who is the National Returning Officer.



Setup Requirement for the Proposed System

1. There will be 6 Physical Locations for Data Centres for the Tallying of Results:
 - The **4 Regional Tally Centres** – Located in the 4 Regional headquarter Towns
 - The **National Tally Centre** – Located in Wellington, Freetown.
 - A **Disaster Recovery Site** at the headquarters Freetown.
2. The establishment of a secure Wide Area Network to interconnect the 6 locations



Procurement Requirements

- The Proposed Results Tally System will involve a lot of Procurement – both Local and International
- The Hardware and software required need to be specified, procured and installed properly
- The technical experts also need to be recruited in time to provide the ICT support



Sustainability Requirement

- Adequate Training and Skills transfer to ensure capacity building of NEC IT personnel, and the sustainability of the system need to be considered
- The physical, technical and maintenance support environment will be a serious consideration



Logistics-deployment and Retrieval

- **Vehicles** – about 400 for Ward Coordinators
- **Boats** – riverine Areas
- **Bike Hire** – for all 14 electoral districts and headquarters
- **Porters** –for remote areas not accessible by vehicle
- **Helicopter** – not provided in budget but negotiable on a needs- be - basis



Advantages of Proposed System

- Significant reduction in the time spent on results processing and hence early announcement of results and declaration of winners.
- Reduction of political tension and mitigation of election violence
- There will be local ownership of the process
- There will be more access to the tally process by stakeholders
- There will be more data security, integrity and redundancy due to the decentralization.
- Increased confidence in the EMB performance



Challenges to New System

- Lack of adequate ICT infrastructure
- Unavailability of adequate electricity supply- dependency on generators and fuel
- The cost of operation will increase significantly as compared to previous system
- The synchronization of data amongst the various Centers and Disaster recovery sites.
- Sustainability of the system after departure of experts



Recommendations

- The UNDP and PSO to speed up the procurement process as soon as possible as the timeline is tight
- The new system should be robust but at the same time user friendly to be use effectively and efficiently.
- The NEC should be involved in the Procurement Process to ensure capacity building and local ownership.



I thank you
for your
attention

