

MANDATE PROTECTION

FACT SHEET



THIS MESSAGE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE LAGOS STATE CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIP (LACSOP) WITH SUPPORT FROM THE STATE ACCOUNTABILITY AND VOICE INITIATIVE (SAVI)/DFID



How to protect your mandate?

1. Know parties manifestos, statement and constitution
2. Report incidence of electoral malpractices to police, media, and other interest groups
3. Encourage the next person to register and vote
4. Use of FOI Act to access information and protect electoral integrity
5. identify and engage with existing institutions/organizations with same ideology
6. Build relationship with law enforcement agencies
7. Introduce and organize community Poll Mandate Watchers (PMW) to observe elections process within their community.

Collect Evidence and Base Your Reports on Facts

When you experience or witness electoral malpractice and fraud during the electoral process, it is important to report such incidents to the appropriate authority and to the media. It is equally important that you base your complaint or report on detailed facts and that you have evidence ready if possible. Video cameras, tape recorders, and even the cameras on your mobile phones can be useful tools to document incidents. Otherwise, statements made by witnesses to a situation can also serve as evidence of electoral misconduct.

ABOUT LACSOP

The **Lagos State Civil Society Partnership (LACSOP)** is a platform of major civil society networks and coalitions working with the Lagos state Government – the executive as well as the legislature, for the effective implementation of critical development issues.

LACSOP's focus areas include:

- ▶ Improved voice and accountability in governance
- ▶ Support better service delivery at the LGA level
- ▶ Support to participatory legislative process in Lagos State

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GRAPHIC DESIGN BY GRASSROOT PEOPLE AND GENDER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

What is Democracy?

In the simplest sense, **Democracy is a government of the people, by the people and for the people**, in a democratic political system; government power is legitimized by the consent of the governed (people). Democracy is thus a political system of governance that, through a number of democratic institutions and procedures, secures its citizens a range of civil and political liberties and regularly allows them to participate and compete in free and fair elections.

What is Mandate protection?

“Election mandate” involves the relationship between the people’s votes and the outcomes of an election; people’s votes and their participation in the electoral process represent their giving consent to the candidates for whom they vote to govern on their behalf. In Nigeria, candidates who win a majority of votes are considered to have won the people’s mandate to govern. The people’s right to choose and reject representatives at the ballot box should be revered, and participating in an election is a fundamental right. However, it is also citizens’ responsibility to engage in the electoral process, to stand up against malpractice, and to ensure that the elections in their country are meaningful.

Who ensures that our mandate is Protected

Stakeholders and their Responsibilities

Government

- Should create a level playing ground for all political parties and persons.
- Creating a truly independent multi stakeholder INEC.
- Provide adequate funding for INEC



INEC/SIEC

- Organizing, undertaking, and supervising all elections;
- Prepare, maintain and update the registration of voters;
- Monitor campaigns of all political parties including their finances;
- Conduct voter's/ civic education;
- Counting, recording and announcing results;
- Prosecuting violations of the Electoral Act.



Law enforcement/Security

- They are to protect the election process by keeping peace during and after Election Day



Citizens

- Seek to know and understand party manifestoes
- Articulate community needs and engage political office seekers on their planned programme
- Register to vote and participate in the voting exercise. Observe the count and ensure that votes are not stolen



Media

- To ensure equal access to and coverage of all competing political parties and candidates;
- To present accurate information on parties programmes and campaigns.
- To provide fair and informative reporting on the election process and the elections law; and
- To educate and enlighten the citizens about their rights and responsibilities in elections.



CSOs/FBOs/CBOs

- To monitor/observe the electoral processes including the Election activities.
- Advocate and lobby for appropriate electoral laws to guide the conduct of elections.
- To raise awareness of citizens to vote and protect their votes.



Political Parties

- Ensure that the party constitutions are widely disseminated among members and that the provisions of the constitutions are respected.
- Practice internal democracy in all areas of their operations, particularly in the selection of party leaders and the nomination of candidates for elections.
- Establish independent and credible processes for resolving disputes.
- Facilitate participation of marginalized groups including women, persons with disabilities and youths in the political process through the application of affirmative action policies and practices.



Judiciary

- Administer the oath of office to elected officials,
- Address election petitions through judicial means,
- Ensure justice through fair hearing and quick dispensation of cases.



Traditional/religious group

- To enlighten their members on the right to vote.
- Play a major role in promoting the culture of free and fair elections.
- Commit to devote time, energy and resources to the monitoring of all stages of the electoral process.



Election observer

To observe elections and give unbiased reports

