Election Integrity and Irregularities:



An Analysis of the **Ondo State** 2024 Governorship Election Result



About Civichive

Civichive was established in 2017 as the innovation hub of BudgIT with the goal of developing new civic tech leaders and also creating an innovative virtual and physical space for partnerships and to support new civic tech organisations and strengthen the capacity of already existing NGOs in Nigeria In order to meaningfully impact the Nigerian civic tech space.

Our overarching goal is to stimulate citizens' interests around public data and trigger discussions towards better governance. We are committed to the principles of open data & governance, citizen participation, and data transparency.

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A Brief Introduction

Ondo State is a state located in the southwestern region of Nigeria, Known as the "Sunshine State, It is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, vibrant economic activities, and a political landscape that has evolved significantly since its creation in 1976. Ondo is home to a diverse population that includes the Yoruba ethnic group and other minorities.

The creation of Ondo State was part of a broader initiative by the Murtala Ramat Muhammed GCFR administration to return Nigeria to civilian rule and address the issue of state creation. In August 1975, the administration set up a panel chaired by Mr. Justice Ayo Irikefe to explore the creation of new states (Kolawole, 2021).

As a result, on February 3, 1976, Ondo State was one of seven new states created, expanding Nigeria's federation to 19 states. Ondo State spans 18,165 square kilometers and had an estimated population of about 2.7 million people at the time of its creation.

The state thrives on agriculture, and

boasts a growing urban sector centered around its capital, Akure. It is bounded in the North by Ekiti/Kogi State; in the East by Edo State; in the West by Oyo and Ogun States and in the South by the Atlantic Ocean.

Since its creation in 1976, it has grown to become the nineteenth largest state in Nigeria and is renowned for the iconic Idanre Hills. Akure, the state capital, serves as the administrative hub overseeing 18 local government areas, 3 senatorial districts, and 203 political wards. With a current population of about 5.3 million people (ONDIPA, 2023), the majority of its inhabitants are Yoruba.

Elections in Ondo State have historically been a reflection of its dynamic political environment, often characterized by intense competition and high voter engagement. Over the decades, the state has experienced diverse leadership transitions, swinging between political parties in response to national and local sentiments.



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2.0 What led to Off-cycle Elections?

According to Section 18O(2) of the Nigerian Constitution, a governor is required to vacate office four years after being sworn in. Following the 2007 general elections, after a petition, initially filed on May 14, 2007, challenged the election of Dr. Olusegun Agagu, the Peoples Democratic Party candidate. Offcycle elections are conducted to address unforeseen vacancies or resolve specific local or state issues. In Nigeria, these elections are often triggered by factors such as electoral disputes, court rulings that annul elections or mandate reruns, unexpected events like the death of a candidate, and constitutional challenges related to electoral irregularities.

These circumstances require adjustments to the electoral timetable, resulting in off-cycle elections, which are held outside the usual general election cycle. Off-cycle elections often face challenges such as low voter turnout due to their timing and limited public visibility. Additionally, conducting elections outside the regular cycle can strain electoral bodies' resources, while

insufficient media coverage further diminishes voter awareness and engagement.

According to Section 180(2) of the Nigerian Constitution, a governor is required to vacate office four years after being sworn in. As such, when unforeseen events disrupt the election schedule, off-cycle elections are necessary to ensure compliance with this constitutional requirement.

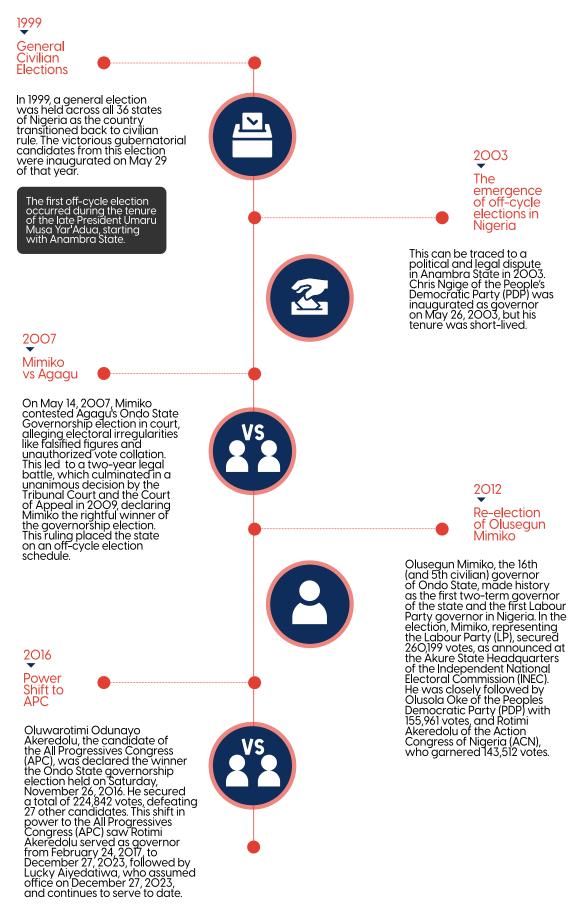
Currently, eight states in Nigeria hold off-cycle governorship elections namely Anambra, Bayelsa, Imo, Kogi, Edo, Ondo, Ekiti, and Osun. Years after its first election in 1999, Ondo State held its most recent off-cycle election on November 16, 2024.

Since the restoration of civil rule in 1999, Nigeria has undergone six general election cycles, with seven off-cycle gubernatorial elections occurring intermittently in Anambra, Bayelsa, Imo, Kogi, Edo, Ekiti, Ondo, and Osun states.



3.0

Key milestones in Ondo State Election History



4.0 2024 Ondo State Governorship Election.

In the 2024 election, 18 political parties contested in the election with ADP and SDP the only party with female contestants as running mates

while ADC also had one PWD candidate as running mate.

The four key candidates in this election are:





The All Progressive Congress (APC) candidate and incumbent governor of Ondo State, Lucky Aiyedatiwa, was announced as the winner of the election by INEC at the conclusion of the poll.







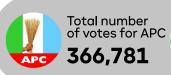
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The results were declared at INEC

Headquarters in Akure by Professor Olayemi Akinwumi, the Returning Officer, stating that Aiyedatiwa (APC) won all 18 local governments with a total number of 366,781, Ajayi (PDP) scored 117,845 votes while Dr Abbas Mimiko (ZLP) came third with 2.692 votes.

At A Glance: Ondo State 2024 Off-cycle Governorship Election as announced by INEC













In our recent publication on the 2O24 Edo State governorship election result analysis where we found out that there was a 2O,364 increase in what was announced by INEC for APC and what was obtainable on IREV.

4.1 Election & Election Results in Nigeria: A Conundrum

INEC as an institution is responsible for the conduction of election and compilation of election results from the polling units, to registration area/ward, to local government collation centres, state and national collation centres as it may be depending on the type of election. At each of this level of collation, they are also charged with announcement of these results.

In our recent publication on the 2024 Edo State governorship election result analysis where we found out that there was a 20,364 increase in what was announced by INEC for APC and what was obtainable on IREV. Meanwhile, PDP's votes had a reduction margin of 12,384 votes (Civic Hive, 2024). This has always been a repeated pattern as it concerns elections and result collation in Nigeria. This is also evident in the last 2023 Presidential election results from Oviabo LGA. River States where the vote for Bola Tinubu (APC) was six times larger in the officially announced results compared with the polling station count from results uploaded on IREV while that of Peter Obi was halved by two (Isaacs, 2023).

In several elections, Civic Hive has observed the conduct and result collation framework of INEC as we have stressed how the entire process allows for result manipulation, weird anomalies and intentional sabotage of the result collation process by electoral officers. While it is imperative to minimize the time lapse between election day and announcement of the final election results, it is also of great importance that the people's vote should actually count in all elections.

Results as announced by INEC should reinforce the people's faith in the institution and not cause further division and voter apathy in the country. As any unnecessary, unexplained delay or perpetual recurrence of disparities in voters results as the ballot boxes and result moves from PUs to different collation. centres will feed suspicions concerning the integrity of results processing. Whether real or perceived, biased processing of election results will increase the likelihood of outbreaks of violence or apathy in coming elections.

5.0 What Happened in Ondo State?

As voters in Ondo state reelected their governor, a number of petitions were made against the election outcomes, but this did not stop INEC from issuing Certificate of Return to the APC candidate as such cases were thrown and disqualified on different grounds (Dada, 2024).

foremost civic tech organization, which has studied elections and observed the elections, we have uncovered a lot of anomalies, incongruencies and result manipulation.

The election was marred with vote buying, voter suppression, low turn out; and irregularities in the result as announced by INEC, what our observers collated at the ward and what we collated on IREV.

5.1 Our Methodology

Our process for analysis and compilation for the election result involves three layers of analysis. First, we collated the election results as announced and declared by INEC at the State Collation Centre in Ondo State.

Secondly, our team scanned through all the results from 3,933 PUs in all of the 18 LGAs in Ondo State as uploaded by INEC on IREV. Out of 3,933 results expected, we scanned the 3,911 PU results available on IREV as at November 19, 2024. The percentage result we analysed on IREV is 99.44%.

Thirdly, using certain metrics and sampling methods, we deployed 106 ward level agents across 8 carefully selected LGAs which covered all the

senatorial districts in Ondo State. The 9 LGAs included.

- Ondo Central: Akure South (11 Wards), Ondo West (12), Idanre
- Ondo North: Owo (11), Ose (12), Akoko SW (15)
- Ondo South: Ilaje (12), Ese Odo (10), Okitipupa (13)

Our agents at each of the ward collation centers observed the ward collation process before results are transported to the LGA collation centres. Our assumptive theory. which we have observed during our years of observing elections in Nigeria is that most manipulation of results happens at the LGA collation centers.

Finally, for the purpose of our analysis we focused on the top three candidates/parties in the election.

5.2 Result Analysis

5.2.1 Election result: At A Glance

In the table below, we did a comparison of election results as announced by INEC and what Civic Hive collated using the PU results that have been uploaded on IREV. Across the board, you can see that there seems to be a wide gap between what INEC announced and what actually happened at the Polling Units.

However, it is surprising to observe an increase in the number of registered voters by 128,090 as announced by INEC against the record shown on IREV.



Out of 3,933 results expected, we scanned the 3.911 PU results available on IREV as at November 19. 2024. The percentage result we analysed on IREV is 99.44%.

What exactly is the number of registered voters in Ondo State? This inconsistency is also evident in the total number of accredited voters. While INFC announced the total

number was 510,855, the summation on IREV showed that the number is greater than that by a difference of 7,947 voters.

	Registered Voters	Accredited Voters	APC Votes	LP Votes	PDP Votes
As Announced by INEC	1,981,459	510.855	366,781	1,162	117,845
IREV Data*	1,853,369	518,802	364,969	13,490	113,726

This analysis represents only 99.44% of PUs results from Ondo State. See Appendix for LGA breakdown

On the votes accrued by our focus parties, we uncovered that the votes announced by INEC are not a representation of what is on IREV. As announced by INEC vs what is on IREV, APC's votes increased by 1,812; PDP votes increased 4,119 and to our shocking dismay, LP's votes were drastically reduced by 12,328! This further shows the ineffectiveness of INEC's result collation.

5.2.2 Ward Level Result Analysis

As stated earlier, Civic Hive deployed 106 ward level observers to selected wards in 9 LGAs across the state. With this, we were able to follow the numbers from different polling stations and what they turn out to be when they get to the ward collation center.

With this additional level of analysis and observation, we discovered a lot of damming disparities in election results. Our observation and investigation showed that some votes that were recorded at the PUs, and uploaded by INEC officials to IREV did not make it to the ward collation sheets and in some cases the numbers were inflated and in other cases deflated.

In Akure South LGA, we analyzed results from 4 wards where our observation took place and we were able to get a copy of the signed ward level result sheet. What we did was to calculate the sum total polling unit results in these wards to see if it tallies with what was written as the final figure on the ward sheet.

Wards in Akure South LGA	APC (IReV)	APC (Ward)	LP (IReV)	LP (Ward)	PDP (IReV)	PDP (Ward)
APONMU	1,571	1,300	1,571	1,300	1,571	1,300
GBOGI/ISIKAN I	4,697	2,937	447	37	1,739	1,930
GBOGI/ISIKAN II	3,528	2,510	291	27	1,409	1,756
IJOMU/OBANLA	3,439	2,727	479	24	1,639	1480

We discovered that in Aponmu ward, the total number that APC got as collated on the IREV is 1571, meanwhile what was recorded on the signed ward collation sheet is 1300. For PDP, they scored 504 and the ward

collation sheet showed an increase by 106 votes. Across these 4 wards, you will notice that LP's numbers were severely reduced. This can also be noticed with APC votes and partly PDP votes.

Ward	APC (IReV)	APC (Ward)	LP (IReV)	LP (Ward)	PDP (IReV)	PDP (Ward)
Ifore / Odosida / Loro	1,955	1,115	357	8	618	409

In Ondo West LGA, the same pattern is also observed. Where the results from the polling units does not align with what was recorded and announced at the ward collation centre. As can be observed from the

table above, LP's votes suffered the most percentage reduction in what was recorded and uploaded by INEC from the polling unit to IREV and what was announced and recorded on the ward collation sheet.

	APC (IReV)	APC (Ward)	LP (IReV)	LP (Ward)	PDP (IReV)	PDP (Ward)
ALA-ELEFOSAN	920	1,003	0	1	433	509
IDALE-LEMIKAN	811	811	2	2	920	920
IROWO	648	648	0	0	787	785
ISALU EHINPETI	560	560	2	2	604	604

In Idanre LGA, in the wards listed in the table below, we could see that there in some instances the result from collated from IREV and what was recorded at the ward tallied. However we can still notice some minor differences in the APC and PDP votes in Ala-Elefosan and Irowo respectively.

	APC (IReV)	APC (Ward)	LP (IReV)	LP (Ward)	PDP (IReV)	PDP (Ward)
AFO	1,614	1,614	0	0	381	381
IDOANI I	1,322	1,388	0	0	342	243
IDOANI II	1,333	1,354	1	1	337	336
IDOGUN	1,187	1,187	0	0	383	383
IFON I	1,724	1,724	1	1	417	417
IJAGBA	1,108	1,108	2	2	183	183
IMERI	632	632	1	1	467	467

In Ose LGA, we noticed that the following wards Afo, Imeri, Ijagba, Ifon 1, and Idogun's results tallied with what recorded at the polling units and uploaded on IREV with what was announced at the ward collation centre. The minor differences in the results can be seen

at Idoani ward 1 and 2.

In Akoko South West, we also noticed similar irregularities in election results. For example, APC's votes had unexplained increase in some wards while LP votes were indiscriminately erased.

	APC (IReV)	APC (Ward)	LP (IReV)	LP (Ward)	PDP (IReV)	PDP (Ward)
OKA I IBAKA / SABO	2,300	2,330	20	1	325	331
OKA II B OKIA/KOROWA /SIMERIN/UBA	2,352	2,524	0	0	387	403
OKA III A AGBA	1,752	2,154	150	0	321	239
OKA III B OWASE /IKESE /IWONRIN/EBINRIN/IDORIN	2,765	2,722	128	0	406	485
OKA V A OWALUSIN/AYEPE	2,383	2,370	228	2	704	560
SUPARE II	1,747	1,969	71	2	394	433

The consistent pattern in the erasure of LP votes raises a lot of inquiry about INEC's result collation processes. Have INEC officials conspired or intentionally manipulated votes for LP to reflect zero support base for the party? This pattern also confirms the suspicion that a percentage of

votes by voters do not make it to the ward coalition centre.

Finally, in Ilaje, Ese Odo and Okipupa LGAs, we noticed some conformity between IREV results and what we collated at each of the ward collation centers.



Selected wards under llaje LGA	APC (IReV)	APC (Ward)	LP (IReV)	LP (Ward)	PDP (IReV)	PDP (Ward)
AHERI	3,173	3,263	24	24	595	595
ETIKAN	2,050	2,049	3	2	239	239
MAHIN II	3,165	2,914	85	85	379	330
MAHIN III	3,235	3,222	14	14	485	485
UGBO I	1,454	1,454	12	12	161	161
UGBO II	2,695	2,246	10	10	341	311
UGBO V	1,508	1,388	2	0	119	119
UGBO VI	836	877	8	8	198	199

As seen in the tale below, In Ukparama 1 ward, we also noticed that LP's votes were reduced, meanwhile PDP's votes

at the ward got an increase by 57 votes. In Ukparama ward 2,, we notice conformity in IREV and INEC's ward results.

Selected Wards under Ese Odo LGA	APC (IReV)	APC (Ward)	LP (IReV)	LP (Ward)	PDP (IReV)	PDP (Ward)
AROGBO II	1,235	1,235	1	1	767	767
UKPARAMA I	1,967	1,861	64	7	403	460
UKPARAMA II	1,967	1,967	2	2	424	424

In Okitipupa LGA, Ilu Titun ward 2 has correct figures when put side by side with what we collated on IREV. We can also observe that LP's votes in

this LGA align with our IREV coalition. Meanwhile, there still exist a lot of disparities in APC and PDP numbers.

Selected Wards under Ese Okitipupa LGA	APC (IReV)	APC (Ward)	LP (IReV)	LP (Ward)	PDP (IReV)	PDP (Ward)
IJU-ODO/EREKITI	1,875	1,872	2	2	584	584
IKOYA/OLOTO	1,771	1,740	3	3	769	760
ILUTITUN II	1,500	1,500	2	2	691	691
ILUTITUN III	1,814	1,974	1	1	845	935

Just to clarify, the results on IREV portal are results signed and uploaded from the polling units via the BVAS machine whereas the

ward results are directly from the ward collation centres which are verified and signed by INEC officials themselves.

6.0

To what extent can we trust Ward Level Result Collation?

Ordinarily, when people vote at the polling units, the results are compiled by votes accrued by each party and recorded on the Form EC 8A which are then taken to the ward collation centre. At the ward collation centres, each polling unit's results are recorded together on a sheet called Form EC8B. What this means is the score accrued to a party at a polling unit should be the same on the ward collation sheet that the polling unit belongs to.

Our analysis of the Ondo State Governorship Election shows that in many cases, this is not the case. We uncovered several cases of total disappearance of polling unit results of parties on the ward collation sheets, incongruencies of election results and massive data falsification by INEC officers during their conduct of the 2024 Ondo State Off-Cycle

Governorship Election.

To prove our assertion, we will look at randomly selected polling units from two different wards in Akure South LGA to show the level of non-compliance to electoral integrity and massive falsification of results by INEC officials. For the sake of this case study, we will look at ljomu/Obanla Ward 4, and Apomu Ward 3 in Akure South LGA.

Case Study 1: ljomu/Obanla, Ward 4, Akure South LGA

In Ijomu/Obanla ward, there are 50 PUs that make up the entire ward. We looked at 10 randomly selected PUs to show how polling unit results from these locations were falsified, manipulated and altered by INEC officials.



We uncovered several cases of total disappearance of polling unit results of parties on the ward collation sheets, incongruencies of election results and massive data falsification by **INEC** officers during their conduct of the 2024 Ondo State Off-Cycle Governorship

PU No	PU Location	APC (IReV)	APC (Ward)	LP (IReV)	LP (Ward)	PDP (IReV)	PDP (Ward)
07	St. Stephen	163	102	56	1	69	66
10	Osisi Quarters	88	62	27	0	39	48
13	Fibico Hotel	115	76	20	0	0	41
14	Akinjos House	142	113	10	0	82	43
15	ljapo H. S.	97	48	15	3	49	34
17	Ijapo Recreational	89	50	20	0	57	67
18	Cosmic Hotel	131	68	23	3	53	36
19	Test Ground Ado	99	78	39	0	29	30
20	AP Filling Station Ado Road	155	74	78	5	71	19
48	Fagbemi House	107	49	33	2	71	19
	Total	1,186	720	321	14	520	403



n these 10 PUs that we spotlighted, LP scored a total of 321 votes on IREV meanwhile, the total that was recorded for them was 14 votes across 10 LGAs. For APC, in this 10 selected PUs, the total votes collated on IREV is 1,186, meanwhile on the ward collation sheet, the corresponding result for APC was 720. In all of the PUs identified in this ward, APC's votes from the PUs got reduced when they arrived at the ward collation centre.

For PDP, in this selected PUs, INEC announced a combined 403 votes for PDP meanwhile the numbers does not correspond with the 520 votes that was collated on IREV. A shocking discovery for us is at ward 13, Fibico Hotel where the PU result on IREV showed that PDP had zero votes meanwhile at the ward collation sheet, PDP magically had 41 votes. How is this possible?

For LP, it can be seen from the table that they were gravely impacted by

this anomalies in result collation. In these 10 PUs that we spotlighted. LP scored a total of 321 votes on IREV meanwhile, the total that was recorded for them was 14 votes across 10 LGAs. For example, in Ward 20, AP Filling Station, IREV result showed that LP scored 78 votes at the polling unit, whereas when the result got to the ward collation centre, what was recorded for LP was 5 votes. This was also the case in PU 10, 13, 14, 17 and 19 where LP scored zero votes on the ward sheets whereas they had significant numbers.

- Case Study 2: Ward 1, Aponmu Ward, Akure South LGA

There are 19 PUs in Aponmu ward in Akure South LGA. We selected 5 PUs and crosstabulated their election results vis-a-vis what was uploaded on IREV.

PU No	PU Location	APC (IReV)	APC (Ward)	LP (IReV)	LP (Ward)	PDP (IReV)	PDP (Ward)
01	Lisa Camp	180	135	35	1	25	71
03	Ita Oniyan	185	141	45	15	48	45
10	Aponmu Community	295	113	20	0	10	73
13	Ajegunle	24	24	0	0	20	20
17	Akobo Camp	32	32	0	0	9	9
	Total	716	445	100	16	112	218

In the selected PUs, only Akobo Camp and Aponmu Community polling unit result tallied with the ward we observed at the ward collation centre. For APC, the total number of votes in these selected PUs stood at 445 which is not corresponding to the number of votes collated on IREV.

For PDP, the number of votes

written and declared at the ward was slightly higher than what we collated on IREV. Meanwhile for LP, the numbers from IREV is higher than was INEC officially recorded at the ward collation centre. In a surprising case at ward 10, Aponmu Community polling unit, LP scored a total number of 20 votes at the polling unit whereas they got zero votes recorded for them on the ward collation sheet.

7.0 Call to Action

- INEC to Launch an Internal Audit of Result Collation Framework: Civic Hive recommends an immediate internal audit by INEC on result collation framework and effective monitoring techniques to ensure compliance of PU results conforms with results at all levels of collation.

- Rethinking Election Collation framework

There is a need to re-evaluating the existing election collation framework and propose alternative models or adjustments to the framework, with the aim of enhancing transparency, accuracy, and security in election collation.

This is to get rid of the existing flaws within the current system, such as vulnerabilities to manipulation, fraud, or inefficiencies. A more prudent way to collate results is for results to be collated and declared at polling units and transmitted electronically to a central point where the results are aggregated and announced. This will get rid of the unnecessary middlepoint in the collation process of results. We recommend that INEC transmission of results should be made mandatory for all Presiding Officers at every polling unit and this should also be codified into the ongoing electoral amendment at the National Assembly;

- Role of Political Party Agents

Political parties play a pivotal role in the democratic process, and one of their crucial responsibilities is to actively monitor elections at the polling unit level. This involves deploying trained party agents to each polling unit to observe and document the voting process, from the opening of polls to the counting and announcement of results.

By prioritizing election monitoring at polling units, political parties themselves have the capability to deter electoral malpractice by making it hard for compromised INEC officials to attempt vote rigging, ballot box stuffing, voter intimidation, or other forms of electoral fraud. Their presence also ensures transparency and accountability of votes as they witness the entire voting process and ensure that it is conducted in a transparent and accountable manner, adhering to electoral laws and regulations.

In many polling units that we observed, we discovered the majority of the political parties do not have agents in the polling units in most locations. It is essential that political parties invest in training and equipping their party agents with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively monitor elections at polling units.

Civic Hive also recommends that INEC and the National Assembly should start looking at new opportunities and lessons from other democracies on innovations and new avenues that registered voters can vote on election day seamlessly without undermining the integrity and transparency of the electoral system. The widening gap between registered voters and accredited voters continues to be a concern.

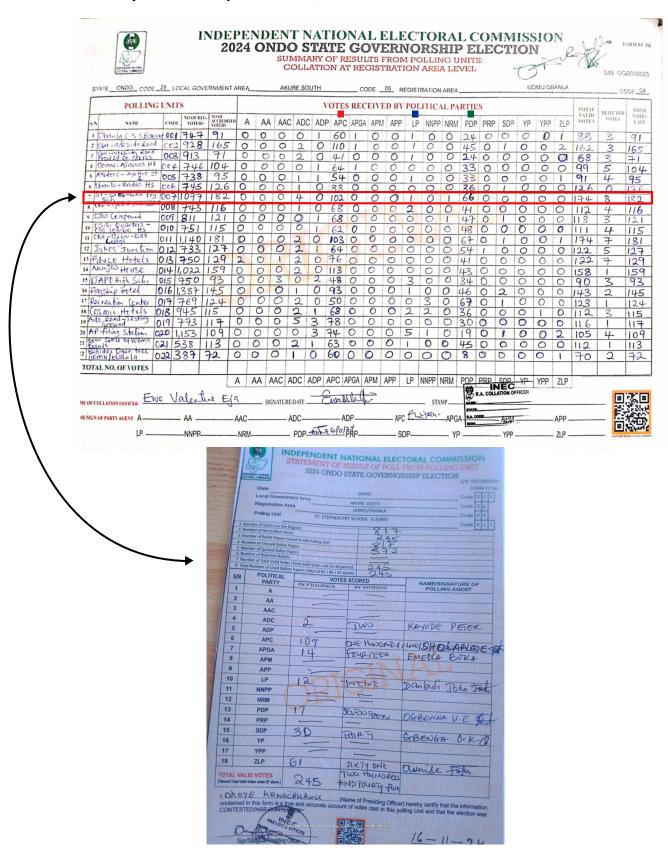


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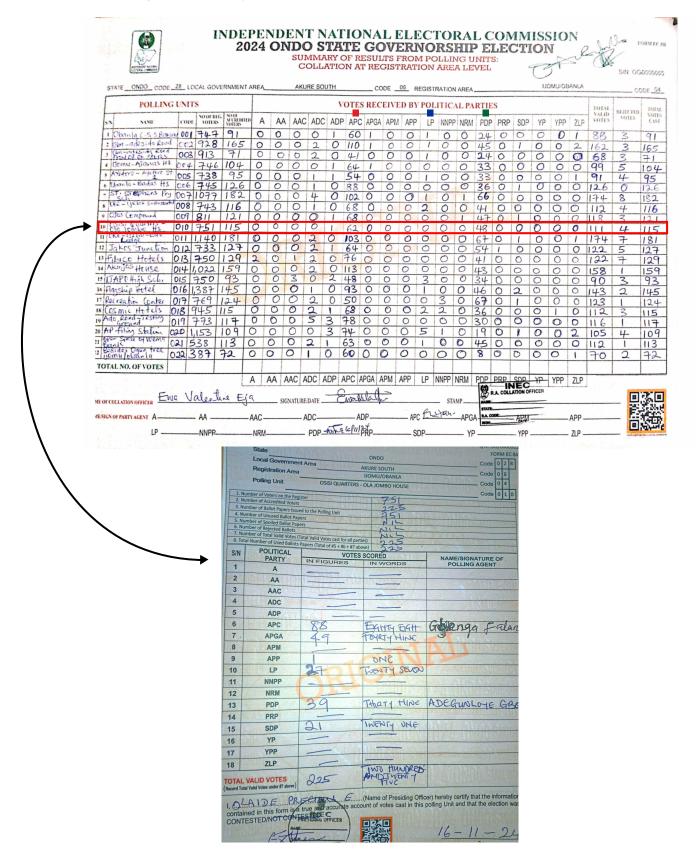
8.0 Appendix:

Case Study 1 - Ward 4, Ijomu/Obanla, Akure South LGA

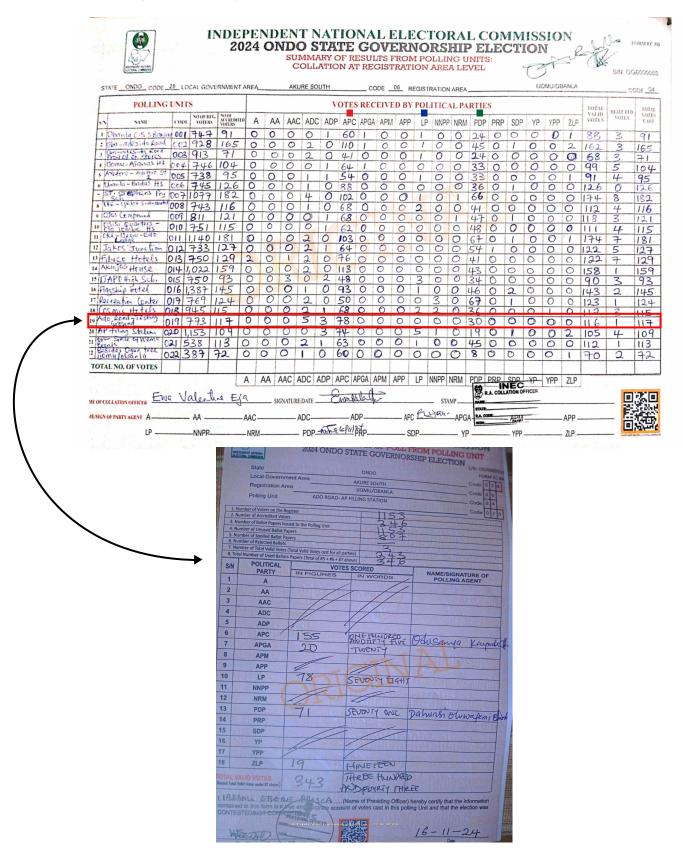




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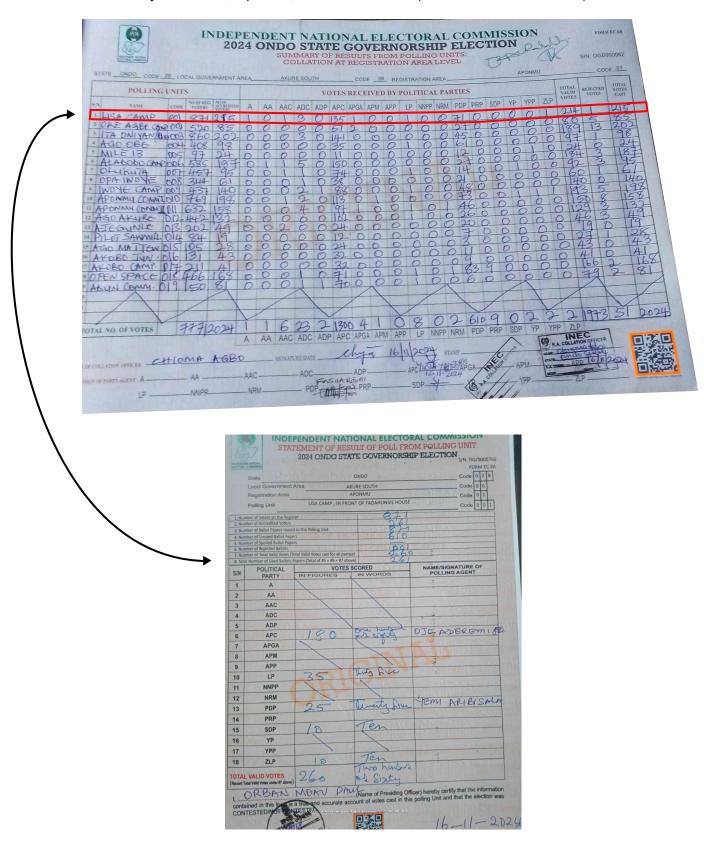


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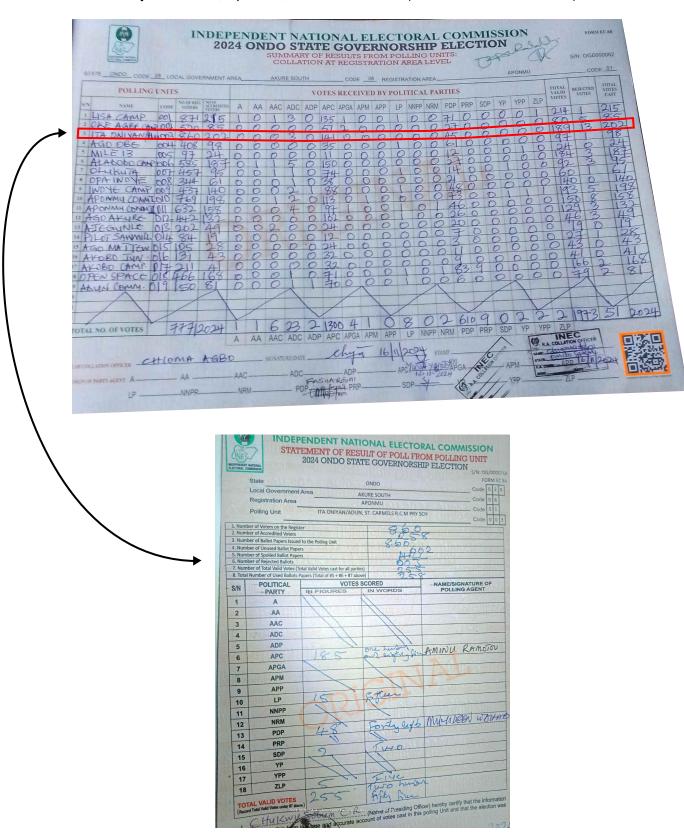




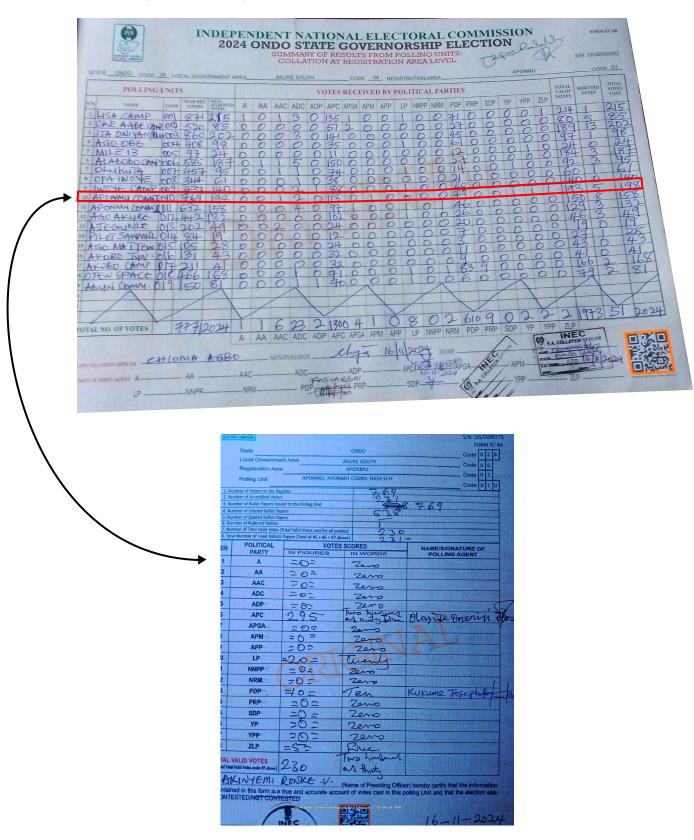
Case Study 2 - Ward 1, Aponmu, Akure South LGA (Ward Level Result Sheet)



Case Study 2 - Ward 1, Aponmu, Akure South LGA (Ward Level Result Sheet)



Case Study 2 - Ward 1, Aponmu, Akure South LGA



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