



## NATIONAL ELECTION WATCH (NEW)

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### Press Statement for Immediate Release

#### ***Freetown, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021: NCRA Confirmation and Registration Exercise commenced on the second schedule in the Northern Region but with Some Challenges***

National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA) started off the Confirmation and Registration Exercise in the Northern Region on the second schedule on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021. NEW observed some improvement on the first day of the exercise in Koinadugu, Falaba and Tonkolili districts, but there were serious challenges in Bombali district ranging from relocation of centres, late opening of centres, late arrival of materials, malfunctioning of equipment and inadequate awareness of the exercise among the people.

NEW recruited, trained and deployed 225 stationed observers, which is 50% of the NCRA established confirmation and registration centres to observe the 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> day of the exercise in the Northern Region. In addition to the stationed observers NEW also deployed supervisors 1 to every 10 observers and 2 roving teams of 2 senior personnel each to have a fair coverage of the entire process.

### Findings

NEW observed that:

- There were no sign posts to indicate location of the centres in all centres observed across the region.
- In Tonkolili, Koinadugu and Falaba districts most of the centres observed opened on time.
- In Bombali district, all centres observed did not open on time and some centres did not open at all.
- Up to about 2:00 pm in Bombali district, some centres neither had NCRA staff nor equipment. For e.g. at WCSL Primary School Bombali Bana in Ward 113 and Lorry Park Makeni, Rogbaneh Road in Ward 121, registrants waited at the centre up to 2:30 pm and left because NCRA personnel did not show up.
- In Tonkolili, Koinadugu and Falaba districts few centres did not open on the first day. For e.g. in Ward 187 Bendugu Sambaya Chieftdom in Tonkolili district, centres did not open due to unavailability of materials; in Ward 131 Kamadugu Sukrola in Falaba district after waiting on to 3:00pm, the NCRA staff left to collect materials from the NCRA district office; In Ward 138 Semendu in Falaba district, Confirmation and Registration did not start due to malfunctioning of equipment; in Ward 159 MCA Primary School Kaya in Koinadugu district, the centre did not open due to unavailability of materials.
- Some centres in Bombali district had malfunctioned equipment or no equipment at all. For e.g. in Community Centre Mapaki, registrants details failed to pop-up; at the Wesleyan Church Primary School Masuba and Makeni Town Council passwords for the computers were not available; Benevolent Islamic Primary School Ropolon and Ropolon Court Barray scanners and finger print pads were malfunctioning; Teko Barracks Recreational centre, there was no computer or generator; in Falaba district, Ward 125 DEC Dogoloya, the VIU 820 equipment

was not responding; in Ward 127 Nonmokoya, the password was not available to login to the computer and in Ward 129 Open Space Lalay, the computer was not functioning.

- In Bombali district, some centres were relocated without communicating to the registrants and the NCRA staff.
- In all centres observed in Koinadugu, Falaba and Tonkolili, centres that were up and running had the required number of NCRA personnel and were all seen performing their roles accordingly.
- Staff recruited were mainly youth with a high number of females in all centres observed across the Region.
- The turn-out in most centres in Koinadugu district was encouraging, whilst in Falaba, Bombali and Tonkolili districts, the turnout was low.
- Whilst there was high presence of NCRA technical and senior staff to give support to the process in Koinadugu, Falaba and Tonkolili, there was none in Bombali district.
- There was no security presence in all centres observed across the Region.
- There were no other observers apart from NEW in all centres observed across the Region.

NEW calls on NCRA to continue to improve on the process by responding to the emerging challenges. NEW believes that the experiences and lessons learnt in one region should guide the exercise in subsequent regions. Finally, NEW calls on all residents in Sierra Leone to exercise their rights by going to the centres to confirm their details or to register.

*National Election Watch (NEW) is a coalition of local and international organizations in Sierra Leone with a common objective of supporting free, fair and peaceful elections.*

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***Banker: Sierra Leone Commercial Bank (SLCB)***