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**TAF Africa**  
... Disability Inclusion Champion

# INCLUSION IN ONDO STATE 2024 ELECTION



## HOW PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDs) FARED

*...a TAF Africa report on the Ondo State 2024 Governorship election*

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# ACRONYMS AND MEANINGS

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AAN	Albinism Association of Nigeria
ADC	African Democratic Congress
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
JONAPWD	Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities
NAPWPD	National Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities
OPD	Organizations of Persons with Disabilities
PWA	Persons with Albinism
PWDs	Persons with disabilities
SCIAN	Spinal Cord Injury Association of Nigeria

**DISCLAIMER:** This document is a product of TAF AFRICA. The views expressed in this report are completely ours and does not necessarily reflect position and opinion of the European Union or The European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EUSDGN) programme.





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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TAF Africa conducted an extensive election observation mission during the 2024 Ondo State Governorship Election. The mission aimed to assess the compliance of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) with Section 54, Subsections 1 and 2 of the Electoral Act 2022, focusing on the provision of assistive tools and the enforcement of priority voting rights for PWDs.

Central to this mission was the evaluation of PWD participation in the electoral process, which reinforced TAF Africa's commitment to overall disability inclusion. To achieve this, 20 stationary citizen observers and 5 roving media observers were trained and deployed to polling units with registered PWD voters. Additionally, a post-election survey was designed to gauge the general participation and satisfaction levels of persons with disabilities with the electoral process. Preceding the election, TAF Africa initiated campaigns such as the "Able to Vote" initiative and partnered with media organizations to enhance awareness and mobilization among PWD voters.

The observation revealed notable progress in disability inclusion by INEC. Specifically, 88% of polling units were found to be accessible, and 96% of PWD voters received priority voting from the polling units observed. These achievements reflect significant advancements by electoral stakeholders in addressing barriers faced by PWDs. However, challenges persist. Assistive tools like Braille ballot guides and magnifying glasses were only available in 60% of locations requiring them, and 50% of observed polling units lacked Form EC 40H, critical for documenting PWD voter data. These gaps emphasize the need for systemic improvements and infrastructural investments to ensure full compliance with disability-inclusive mandates.





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Moreover, INEC's ad-hoc staff exhibited limited understanding of assistive device usage, revealing gaps in training and preparedness. While the legal framework, including the Electoral Act 2022, provides a foundation for inclusivity, its implementation remains inconsistent.

Moving forward, TAF Africa emphasizes the necessity of robust advocacy and stakeholder collaboration to enhance PWD participation in electoral processes. As the observation mission revealed, only 62% of PWDs were able to vote, primarily due to inaccessible infrastructure and inadequate support from electoral officials. TAF Africa remains committed to strategic advocacy and partnerships with INEC, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), and Civil Society groups to create an electoral environment where all PWDs can exercise their voting rights fully and freely.

This report from TAF Africa's election observation mission highlights both the progress achieved and the work that remains to therefore secure a truly inclusive electoral system in Nigeria.





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# INTRODUCTION

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The Governorship Election in Ondo State, held on Saturday, November 16, 2024, marked a significant moment for advancing inclusive democratic practices in Nigeria. As an organization focused on advocating for disability rights and inclusion, TAF Africa leveraged this electoral process to assess the preparedness and commitment of INEC and other stakeholders in facilitating the unfettered participation of PWDs. Through the recruitment, training, and deployment of disability inclusion observers, our mission monitored and documented practices that reflect inclusivity in the electoral process.

Grounded in the mandates of the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018, and Section 54 of the Electoral Act, 2022, this observation mission evaluated INEC's compliance with the requirement to provide assistive tools and accommodations for PWDs. These provisions underlined the importance of accessible voting mechanisms, such as Braille ballot guides for the blind, magnifying glasses for persons with Albinism, large-font materials for the deaf, Form EC 40H for capturing disability status of PWDs, and dedicated priority queues for PWDs, all of which are critical for ensuring equitable participation.

The election also presented a milestone in political representation, highlighted by the candidacy of Barrister Myson Adeyemi Nejo, a person with a physical disability, who represented the African Democratic Congress (ADC). As the only PWD candidate across Nigeria's 2024 governorship elections, his third-place finish signifies progress in elevating the political visibility of the disability community, despite reports of his withdrawal just days before the polls<sup>1</sup>.

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[1]: [Accord governorship candidate, 2 others withdraw from Ondo election, endorses Aiyedatiwa](#)





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This report encapsulated the insights, data, and eyewitnessed accounts gathered during our observation mission. It critically examined INEC's preparedness and measures implemented to accommodate PWDs. It also highlights both advancements and persistent gaps. The report further seeks to guide policymakers, election management bodies, and advocacy groups in their ongoing efforts towards create an electoral environment where PWDs can participate fully, equally, and independently, by presenting these findings alongside actionable recommendations.







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# 1

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR DISABILITY INCLUSION IN ELECTIONS

The legal and policy frameworks surrounding disability inclusion in elections in Nigeria provide the foundation for ensuring the active and equitable participation of PWDs in the democratic process. These frameworks include domestic legislation, electoral guidelines, and international commitments ratified by Nigeria. This chapter reviews the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018, the Electoral Act 2022, and the INEC Guidelines and Frameworks for disability inclusion, examining their implications for the Ondo State Governorship Election of September 21, 2024.

### 1.1 The Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018

Enacted as a landmark legislation for the rights of PWDs, the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018 provides a comprehensive framework for combating discrimination and promoting inclusivity across all sectors, including political participation.

#### Key Provisions:

- **Accessibility Mandates:** Section 4 mandates that public institutions, including electoral bodies, make provisions for accessibility in public services and infrastructure. This includes ensuring that polling units are accessible to persons with physical, visual, or other forms of disabilities.
- **Equal Opportunities:** The Act prohibits discrimination in political participation and requires the government to take affirmative steps to ensure that persons with disabilities are not marginalized.
- **Assistive Tools and Services:** Sections 24 and 25 emphasize the need for accessible services, including the provision of assistive devices, braille, sign language interpreters, and other aids during elections.



TAF Africa's observation in Ondo state revealed varying levels of compliance with this Act. While some polling units provided assistive tools, others failed to meet these standards, highlighting the need for stricter enforcement of Section 4.

## 1.2 The Electoral Act 2022

The Electoral Act 2022, which governs the conduct of elections in Nigeria, includes specific provisions aimed at promoting inclusivity for persons with disabilities.

### Key Provisions:

- **Section 54(1):** This section explicitly requires INEC to take measures to ensure that PWDs are not disenfranchised. It mandates the provision of assistive devices such as braille ballot guides, magnifying glasses, and voter education tailored to PWDs.
- **Priority Voting:** Section 56(2) stipulates that persons with disabilities should be given priority during accreditation and voting, ensuring a seamless electoral process.
- **INEC's Monitoring Obligations:** The Act also requires INEC to monitor and report on measures taken to include PWDs in the electoral process.

The above provision has, however, not guaranteed inclusive participation as TAF Africa observed lapses during the Ondo election. While some polling units adhered to the priority voting protocol, the availability of braille guides and magnifying glasses was inconsistent, suggesting gaps in logistics and distribution planning.





### 1.3 INEC Guidelines and Frameworks for Disability Inclusion

INEC developed several frameworks aimed at promoting disability inclusion in electoral processes in line with the provision of the Electoral Act. Leading on this is the ***INEC Framework on Access and Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the Electoral Process***. This framework outlines INEC's commitment to removing physical, attitudinal, and systemic barriers to electoral participation for PWDs. It emphasizes voter education campaigns tailored for PWDs, accessible polling units, and the recruitment of election staff trained in disability-inclusive practices.

### 1.4 Other International Treaties and Conventions on Disability Inclusion

Nigeria is a signatory to several international conventions that accent the rights of PWDs, including their right to political participation. These include

1. United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD): Article 29 guarantees the political rights of persons with disabilities, including access to voting procedures, facilities, and materials.
2. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 10 emphasizes the reduction of inequalities, while Goal 16 calls for inclusive and representative decision-making.

While these legal and policy frameworks are operational in Nigeria, there is a need for their continuous advocacy, sensitization and capacity building for relevant stakeholders to ensure their effective advocacy.



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## 2

# TAF AFRICA'S ENGAGEMENTS FOR A DISABILITY INCLUSIVE 2024 GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION IN ONDO STATE

Building on the successes of our intervention during the 2024 Edo state Gubernatorial election, the Governorship Election in Ondo state presented another opportunity to assess and improve the inclusion of PWDs in Nigeria's electoral processes. In alignment with its mission to promote the rights and participation of PWDs in governance, TAF Africa embarked on a series of strategic engagements aimed at promoting a disability-inclusive electoral process in Ondo State. These initiatives targeted critical stakeholders, ranging from electoral management bodies to media organizations, to ensure that barriers limiting the political participation of PWDs were identified and addressed.

### 2.1 **Advocacy Visit to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)**

Recognizing the pivotal role of the INEC in ensuring inclusive elections, TAF Africa initiated an advocacy visit to the INEC office. The focus was on stimulating feedback regarding integrity, usage, and gaps in INEC's existing data on PWDs and how such has affected the deployment of relevant assistive tools.

Specifically, the discussions centred on improving the accuracy of disaggregated data to enhance election planning and resource allocation. The data in INEC revealed that with two million, fifty-three thousand and sixty-one (2,053,061) registered voters, including one thousand, seven hundred and eighty-two (1,782) persons with disabilities, this election presented an important opportunity for broader participation. It is commendable that 85.6% of Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs) have been collected, leaving only a low percentage of 14.4%. However, the lack of specific data on PVC collection by persons with disabilities remains an oversight.



Comprehensive and disaggregated data is critical to advancing electoral inclusivity for all. TAF Africa also explored avenues for collaboration with INEC to address gaps in the electoral process and ensure improved participation of PWDs in the governorship elections. This collaboration emphasized the provision of assistive devices, accessible voting materials, and dedicated training for election officials to cater to the needs of PWDs.

## **2.2 Advocacy for Inclusive Media Reportage**

As part of the mobilization of citizens and the electorate in Ondo State towards disability inclusion in the electoral processes, TAF Africa embarked on media advocacy and engagements with selected media houses in Ondo State. During the visits, TAF Africa familiarized the host media houses with the concept of inclusive governance explaining how disability-inclusive reporting would entrench the same. Specifically, TAF Africa enjoined the media house to use their platforms to promote disability-inclusive election and voting processes, especially in the November 2024 off-cycle elections. The media houses expressed appreciation to the TAF Africa team and expressed willingness to use their media platforms to promote disability inclusion in the November elections, and also partner with TAF Africa for deeper engagements to promote disability-inclusive governance in the state beyond the election.

Some results of this advocacy visit include the commitment of the media house to provide effective coverage for the TAF Africa Able to Vote Campaign and also for the effective rapportage of the TAF Africa election hub. Similarly, the media platform Ondo State Radiovision Corporation (OSRC) Television and their radio – Orange FM provided an hour each free airtime for the promotion of the Able to Vote voter education campaign.





This program provided critical information to PWDs, raising awareness about their voting rights, the availability of assistive tools, and the importance of active participation in the election.

### **2.3 “Able to Vote” Voter Education Campaign**

In preparation for the gubernatorial election, TAF Africa organized a 1 day Able2Vote campaign to mobilize PWDs in the state and to familiarize them with provisions of relevant laws and guidelines guaranteeing their participation in the election. Participants at the event were drawn from the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) and all the clusters under JONAPWD which include the Albinism Association of Nigeria (AAN), Spinal Cord Injury Association of Nigeria (SCIAN), National Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities (NAPWPD), National Association of the Blind (NAB), Nigeria National Association of the Deaf (NNAD) and IDEA Nigeria

Participants were educated on electoral provisions, including assistive tools such as Form EC 30 PWD, Braille ballot guide, magnifying glasses, and priority voting arrangements. The presence of INEC’s disability desk officer at the event lent credibility and accentuated the commission’s support for inclusive elections.

The campaign also addressed the need for PWDs to hold INEC accountable for compliance with the electoral framework, emphasizing the importance of active participation to secure their rights. TAF Africa’s community mobilization efforts ensured that registered PWD voters in Ondo State were aware of their rights and equipped to exercise them. The campaign also provided a platform for PWDs to share their experiences and challenges, creating a feedback loop that informed subsequent advocacy efforts.



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Panellists and sign language interpreter at the TAF Africa Able2Vote voter education session



Picture Collage of PWD voters at the TAF Africa Able2Vote voter education session.

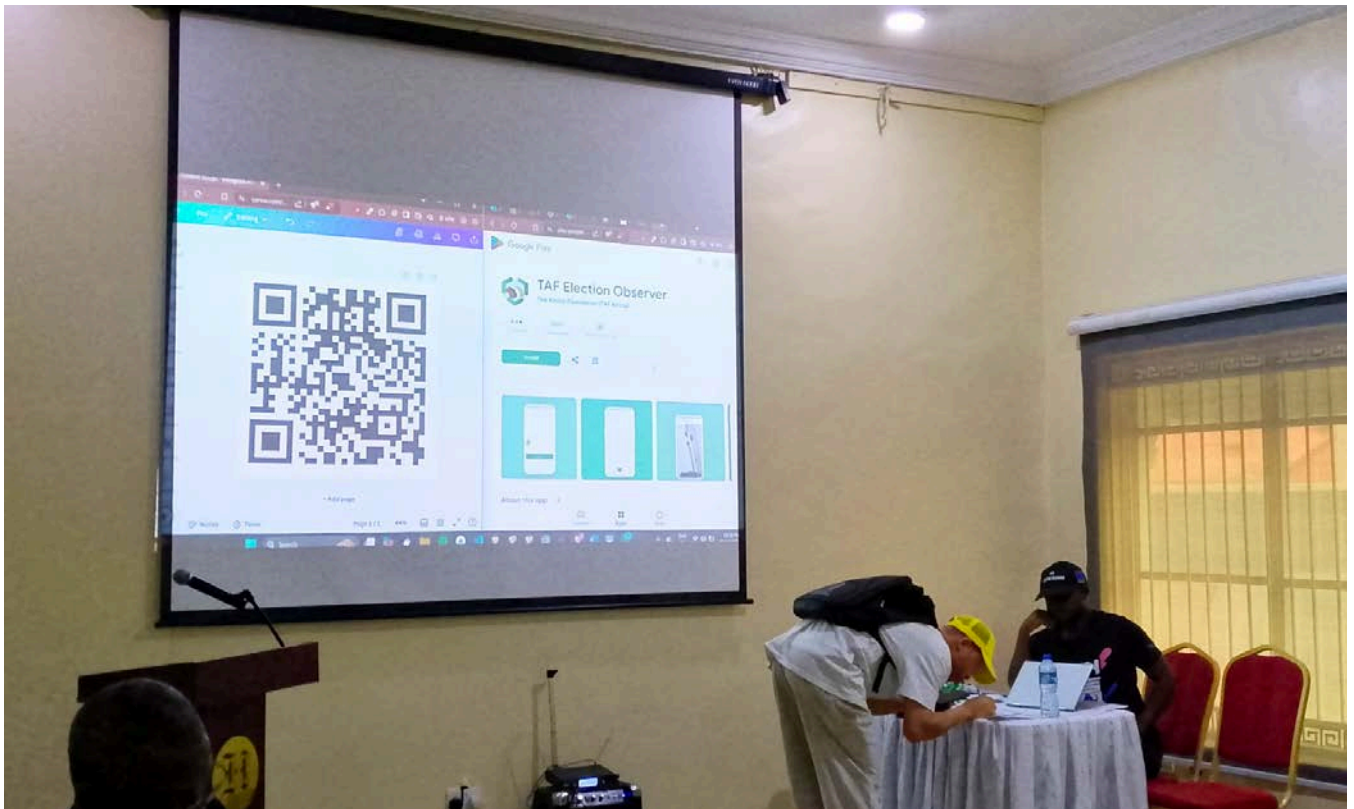




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## 2.4 Recruitment, and Training of Election Observers

TAF Africa recruited and trained 20 election observers across the 18 local government areas in Ondo State. The training program equipped observers with the knowledge and tools to document incidents of non-compliance and ensure accurate, real-time reporting. Observers utilized TAF Africa’s upgraded election observer app to transmit data to the PWD Election Hub, enabling swift analysis and response to identify challenges. This system played a critical role in highlighting areas where electoral processes could be further improved to accommodate the needs of PWDs.



*Observer registering for the TAF Africa election observation training*







# 3

## OBSERVERS DEPLOYMENT METHODOLOGY AND FOCUS

The methodology was structured to ensure a comprehensive, data-driven analysis through strategic observer deployment, rigorous polling unit selection, and effective data collection mechanisms.

### 3.1 Observer Deployment Strategy

#### 1. Number of Observers:

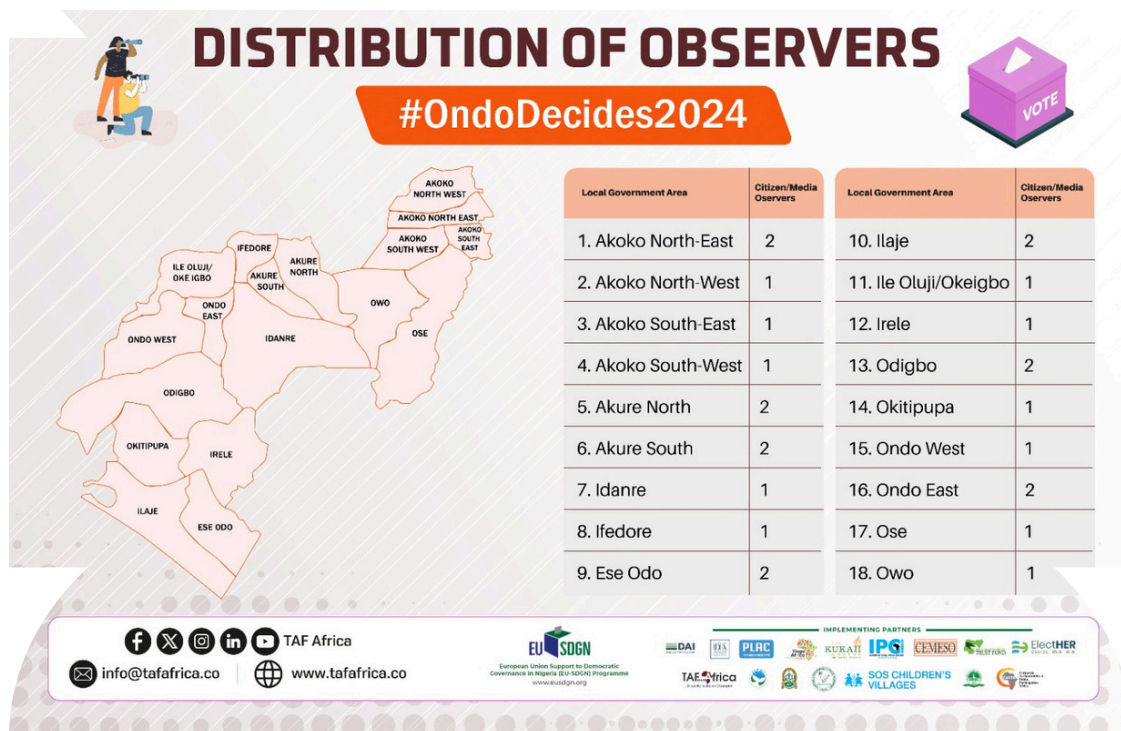
- 20 Stationary Observers: Deployed to specific polling units with registered voters with disabilities to closely monitor accessibility and compliance measures throughout the voting process.
  - **Role**: Their primary responsibility was to observe the accessibility of the electoral process, focusing on the inclusivity of PWDs, and to document the provision and use of assistive tools.
- 5 Roving Media Observers: Tasked with covering broader regions, capturing incidents of non-compliance, and gathering media content that highlighted the voting experiences of PWDs
  - **Role**: Their primary responsibility was to document violations, interact with PWD voters, and gather multimedia evidence to support advocacy for enhanced disability inclusion.

#### 2. Polling Unit Selection Criteria:

- PWD Voter Registration Data: As identified through INEC records, priority was given to polling units with the highest number of registered voters with disabilities,
- Geographical Representation: Polling units were selected to ensure urban and rural representation, highlighting disparities in accessibility and resource provision.
- Historical Trends: Units known for prior challenges with disability inclusion were prioritized to evaluate improvements or persistent gaps.



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### 3. Tools for Data Collection:

TAF Africa Election Observer App: This mobile application facilitated real-time data collection and transmission from observers to the PWD Election Hub for analysis. Key features included:

1. Checklists: Standardized templates for assessing accessibility and assistive tools.
2. Eyewitness feature: Enabled observers to document and report critical incidents of non-compliance or voter disenfranchisement.
3. Photographic Evidence: Integrated functionality for capturing and uploading visuals to validate observations.
4. Deployment of Post-Election Disability-Focused Survey: TAF Africa designed and deployed a disability-focused survey. The survey aimed to gather first-hand information on the participation of Persons with Disabilities, the availability of assistive devices, and the overall experiences of PWDs during the Ondo governorship elections.



## 3.2 Observation Focus

### 1. Accessibility of Polling Stations:

- Evaluated the physical accessibility of polling units, including the absence of physical barriers.
- Assessed the distance and ease of navigation for voters with mobility challenges.

### 2. Compliance with Assistive Tools:

- Verified the availability and use of assistive tools, such as braille ballot guides, magnifying glasses, and large font posters (Form EC 30 PWD), as mandated by the electoral act.
- Examined the preparedness of INEC officials in handling assistive tools and their ability to assist PWD voters effectively.

### 3. Overall Experiences of Voters with Disabilities:

- Gathered qualitative insights on the voting experiences of PWDs, including interactions with electoral officials and fellow voters.
- Monitored for incidents of discrimination, undue delays, or challenges faced during the voting process.
- Documented the inclusivity of security arrangements to ensure a safe environment for PWDs.

This methodology ensured a holistic evaluation of the electoral process, providing actionable insights to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities in future elections.





## 4

# CASE STUDIES OF PWDS' EXPERIENCE OBSERVED AND REPORTED AT THE POLLING UNITS

**4.1 Vote Buying and Electoral Malpractice:** In numerous polling units, vote buying was conducted overtly, undermining the sanctity of the electoral process. For example, at St. David Primary School, Ijomu, Akure South, interested voters were issued coupons before proceeding to the polling booth. After voting for the preferred party of the vote sellers, voters raised their marked ballot papers for party agents to confirm. Upon verification, the agents ticked the coupons, which qualified the voters to collect monetary rewards at a designated spot. Such practices erode electoral integrity and disproportionately affect marginalized groups, including PWDS, who may face additional barriers to accessing or rejecting undue influence.

**4.2 Non-Provision of Assistive Tools:** INEC failed to deploy critical assistive tools at several polling units, contrary to the requirements of the Electoral Act.

**a. Non-Deployment of Form EC 40H:** Form EC 40H, which is essential for capturing and categorizing PWD voter information and statistics, was missing in some polling units with registered voters with disabilities. For instance, this was observed in Igoba/Isinigbo Registration Area, Ward 5, Units 008, 022, and 028 in Akure North Local Government.

**b. Braille Ballot Guide:** This was not provided in polling units with registered blind voters, such as PU St. Thomas Church 1 (PU Code 029, Gbogi/Isikan, Akure South) and Oke-Emeso Registration Area, Ward 5, Unit 008. Blind voters had to rely on assisted voting, which compromises the secrecy and independence of their vote.

**c. Magnifying Glass:** In Ward 6, Oba Ile, Akure North, a voter with albinism was initially denied priority voting and later allowed after intervention. However, the magnifying glass required for her to vote independently was not provided.





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**4.3 Non-Deployment of Form EC 40H:** Form EC 40H, which is essential for capturing and categorizing PWD voter information and statistics, was missing in some polling units with registered voters with disabilities. For instance, this was observed in Igoba/Isinigbo Registration Area, Ward 5, Units 008, 022, and 028 in Akure North Local Government.

**4.4 Inconsistent Priority Voting:** While many voters with disabilities were granted priority voting, some others were not bringing about inconsistencies. TAF Africa commends the polling officials who adhered to the policy of granting priority voting to persons with disabilities in many polling units. This practice is essential to reducing the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in the voting process and should be consistently implemented.



The TAF Africa team at the post-election briefing of #OndoDecides2024





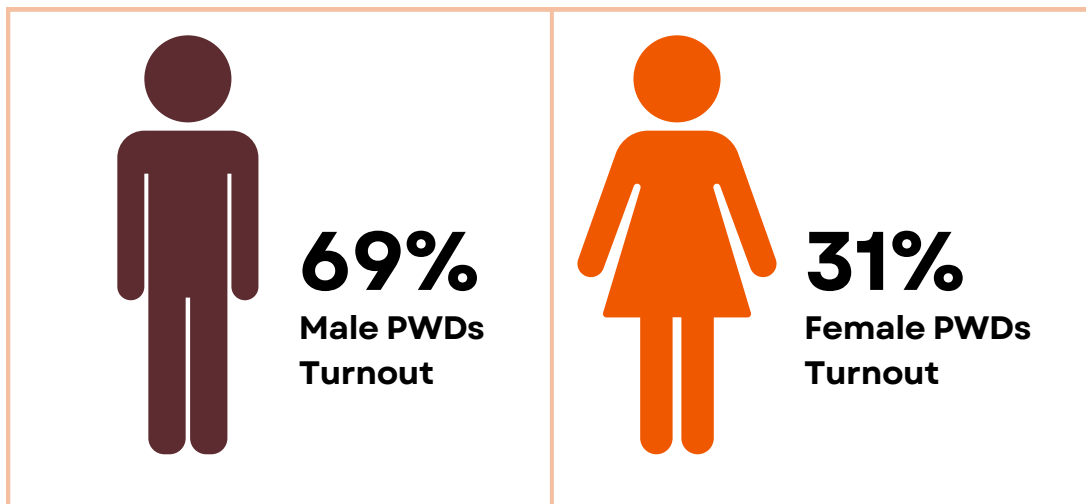
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# 5

## ANALYSIS OF DISABILITY INCLUSION IN THE ONDO STATE GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION: INSIGHTS FROM TAF AFRICA'S FIELD OBSERVATION

### 5.1 Gender Representation of PWD Voters During Ondo Election

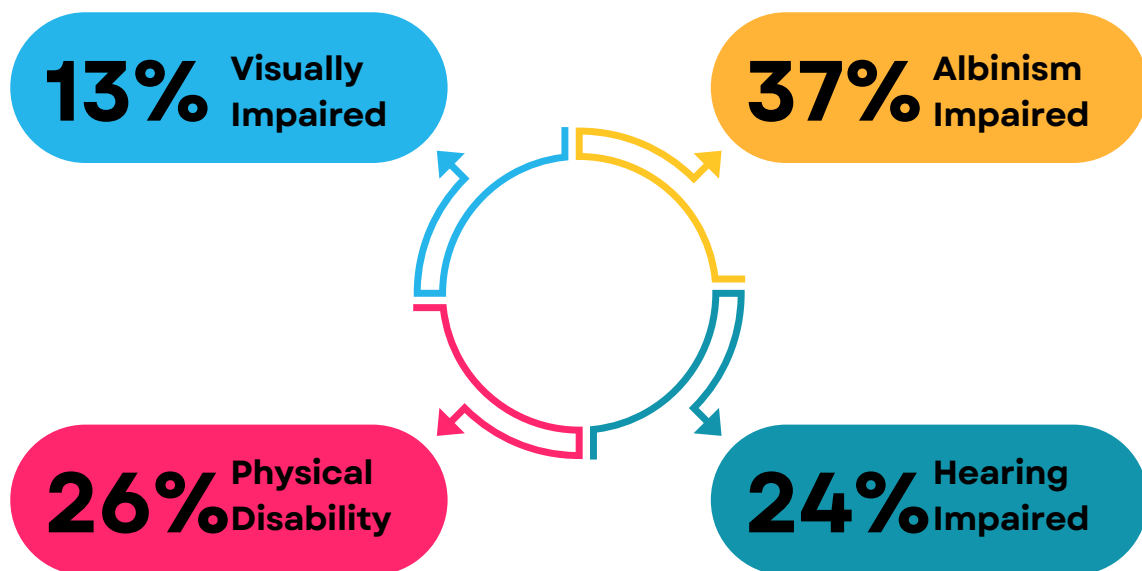
The outcome of the TAF election observation in Ondo state indicated that only 31% of eligible female PWD voters turned out to vote on the election day while 69% of males turned out to participate in the electoral process. The gap in the male-to-female ratio indicates a significant gender disparity which suggests the overall societal underrepresentation of women especially those with disabilities. Going forward, TAF Africa will implement outreaches that target more women with disabilities. TAF Africa will equally initiate gender-focused advocacies to ensure inclusivity and better representation of female PWDs in political and electoral processes.





## 5.2 Disability Type Representation

The data from the election observation revealed that 13% of visually impaired, 37% of persons with albinism, 24% of persons with hearing impairment and 26% of persons with physical disability respectively turned out to exercise their franchise. The diversity in disability representation observed by TAF Africa is commendable, however, there is limited participation from PWDs with visual impairments, indicating a potential barrier to their involvement. TAF Africa will continue to engage election management bodies to address the specific needs and barriers faced by each disability cluster for improved participation across the board.



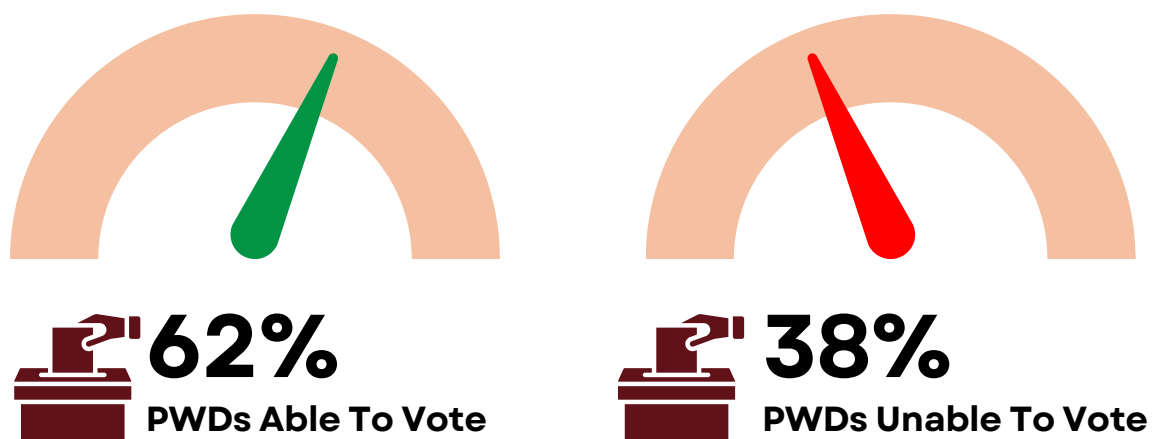
## 5.3 Level of PWDs Voter Participation

From the data collated by TAF Africa election observation, 62% of PWDs engaged were able to vote during the Ondo state governorship election, while 38% could not, citing issues like inaccessible polling units, lack of Permanent Voter Cards, and absence of assistive devices or support from INEC ad-hoc staff.





Unfortunately, 38% who were unable to cast their vote as the result of the challenges further highlight the systemic barriers to PWDs electoral participation, including infrastructure issues and gaps in support services by the electoral umpire. Going forward, TAF Africa will enhance collaborations with INEC to ensure polling units are fully accessible, including ramps and accessible signage where necessary. TAF will equally continue its strategic Able2Vote campaigns to ensure PWDs obtain their PVCs ahead of future elections. TAF Africa will equally collaborate with INEC to train ad-hoc staff on disability inclusion and the use of assistive devices during elections.



#### 5.4 Accessibility of Polling Unit by PWDs

The data collected by the TAF election observation indicated that 88% of polling units visited were accessible, while 12% were found to be inaccessible. Although most polling units were accessible, the 12% inaccessibility rate indicates gaps in infrastructure or planning by the INEC. TAF Africa will continue advocacy engagement with the INEC for the need to conduct holistic accessibility audits of polling units and address the identified gaps in future elections.







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88%

PWDs Accessible PUs



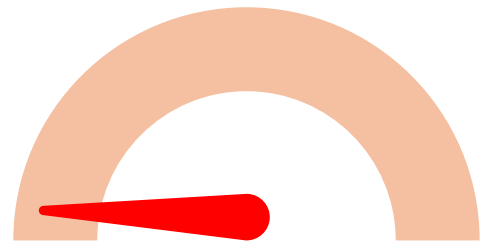
12%

PWDs inaccessible PUs

### 5.5 Polling Units with Priority Voting

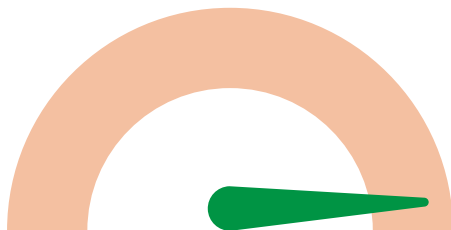
Among the polling units observed, 96% of PWDs were given priority voting while 4% were not accorded priority voting privileges as required.

Although this is an improvement compared to the previous elections, the 4% gap indicates the need for public sensitisation and training of election ad-hoc for consistent implementation of priority voting across all polling units.



4%

No Priority Voting



96%

Priority Voting

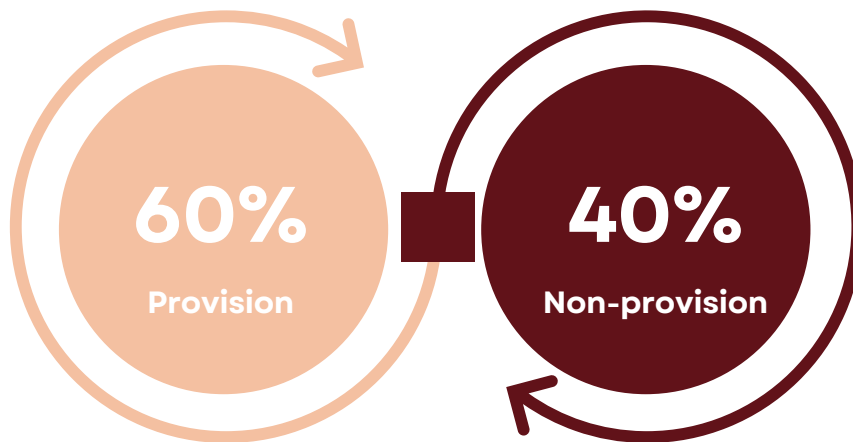




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### 5.6 Provision of Assistive Devices

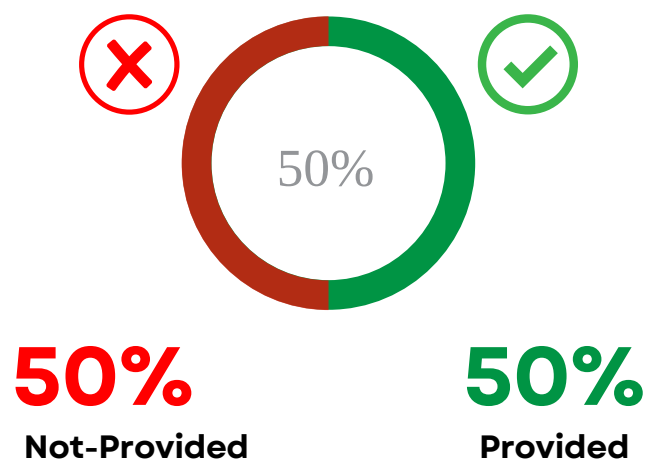
TAF Africa election observation revealed that 60% of polling units with PWDs visited were provided with assistive devices while 40% of the same were not. The gap in the availability of assistive devices for PWDs during elections significantly deterred full participation of PWDs or in some cases their right to privacy voting was breached by making them rely upon assistive voting.



### 5.7 Issuance of Form EC40 H

Among polling units observed, INEC provided EC40 H to 50% of PWDs while 50% were not provided with it.

This inconsistency shows INEC's lack of commitment to documenting PWD data and the application of electoral regulations for PWDs. INEC should continue training and retraining the election ad-hoc staff on the importance of the completion of the form EC40 H to all eligible PWD voters.





## 5.8 PWDs Overall Electoral Experience

Overall, 87% of the PWDs expressed satisfaction with the general conduct of the election, while 13% believed INEC needed to do more as they felt unhappy with the process. Although the majority satisfaction rate is encouraging; however, the 13% dissatisfaction highlights areas for improvement in electoral inclusivity. There is, therefore, a need for INEC to establish a feedback mechanism for PWDs to share their experiences and suggestions to improve future electoral processes.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

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To uphold the rights of persons with disabilities and strengthen the inclusivity of future elections, we call on the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to:

- 1. Ensure Full Deployment of Assistive Tools:** INEC must ensure the provision of Braille Ballot guides, magnifying glasses, written instructions (Form EC 30E PWD), and other necessary tools in all polling units with registered voters with disabilities.
- 2. Enforce Electoral Integrity:** Address the pervasive issue of vote buying through stricter monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.
- 3. Train Electoral Officers:** Provide comprehensive training for polling officials on the rights and needs of PWDs to eliminate inconsistencies in priority voting and ensure compliance with disability-inclusive policies.
- 4. Deploy Form EC 40H Consistently:** This critical form must be made available at all polling units to collect accurate data on PWD voters and improve planning for future elections.

While some progress has been made, our observations so far highlight the urgent need for more robust measures to ensure that elections are accessible, inclusive, and equitable for persons with disabilities.





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## CONCLUSION

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The overall outcome of TAF Africa's election observation mission in Ondo governorship reveals commendable progress in disability inclusion. However, TAF Africa noticed grey areas of persistent gaps in accessibility, provision of assistive devices, and inconsistent implementation of electoral guidelines like the provision of EC40 H to PWD voters. Addressing these issues, TAF Africa recommends continuous and tailored training of ad-hoc staff, partnerships with relevant stakeholders, and infrastructural improvements to enhance the inclusivity of PWDs in future electoral processes.





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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Post Election Survey for PWDs in Ondo State

**Ondo State 2024 Gubernatorial Post-Election Review - TAF Africa**

*This survey sought to determine the experience of persons with disabilities during the Ondo State 2024 governorship election. Please select the option that best aligns with your experience during the election.*

*This survey is expected to be completed by persons with disabilities in Ondo State only*

\* Required

**Background Information**

1. Kindly tell us your gender \*

Male

Female

2. Please select the option that best describes your form of disability \*

Visually impaired

Hearing Impaired

Physical disability

Albinism

Other

3. Did you vote in the governorship election? \*

Yes

No

**Next**

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## Appendix 2: Pre-Election Press Statement on The 2024 Ondo State Governorship Election



### PRE-ELECTION PRESS STATEMENT ON THE 2024 ONDO STATE GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION

Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria | Friday, 15th November 2024

#### Introduction

As Ondo State prepares for the 2024 governorship election, TAF Africa acknowledges the substantial progress made in advancing a more inclusive electoral environment. This election cycle marks a crucial highlight, with both advancements in inclusive electoral practices and remaining challenges that must be addressed to ensure the active participation of all eligible voters, especially persons with disabilities (PWDs).

With 2,053,061 registered voters, including 1,782 people with disabilities, this election represents an important opportunity for broader participation. It is commendable that 1,757,205 Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs) have been collected, leaving only 295,856 uncollected, a low percentage of 14.4%. However, the lack of specific data on PVC collection by persons with disabilities remains an oversight. Comprehensive and disaggregated data is critical to advancing electoral inclusivity for all.

Furthermore, we recognize the commendable candidature of Barrister Myson Adeyemi Nejo, a person with physical disability, who stands as the African Democratic Congress (ADC) candidate. This is a remarkable step toward increased representation for the community of persons with disabilities, considering no PWD candidate contested in the recent Edo State governorship election. However, we are saddened to hear about the decision of the ADC candidate to withdraw less than 48 hours before the election. This unfortunate turn of events diminishes inclusive representation efforts and emphasizes the need for robust support systems for PWD candidates.

#### Pre-Election Key Observations

- **Violent Clashes and Security Concerns:** We noted with concern the pre-election violent incidents, such as the attacks by political thugs in Idanre Local Government Area, which have instilled fear and apprehension among voters, particularly those with disabilities. While INEC has taken proactive steps by training security personnel to provide a tranquil electoral environment, sustained efforts are essential to prevent further disruptions and ensure the safety of all voters.
- **Lack of Aggregated Data:** While the number of PWDs registered as voters is noted, there is no data on PWD-specific PVC collection. This lack of disaggregated Data obstructs comprehensive analysis and planning for accessible elections. INEC's commitment to collecting and reporting detailed data on PVC collection by PWDs in future elections is imperative to achieving full electoral inclusivity.

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- **Withdrawal of a PWD Candidate:** The withdrawal of Barrister Myson Adeyemi Nejo, the only PWD candidate, less than 48 hours before the election is a significant setback for disability inclusion. His presence on the ballot would have provided representation for PWDs in political leadership, a vital factor in promoting inclusive governance. This highlights the need for stronger advocacy and support mechanisms for PWD political aspirants.
- **Financial Inducement Concerns:** Reports of pre-election financial inducements threaten the integrity of the electoral process. The use of money in elections can unfairly influence voters, particularly those in vulnerable communities, including PWDs. Electoral stakeholders must take stronger measures to ensure transparency and guard against financial manipulation.

### TAF Africa’s Deployment Plan

TAF Africa is committed to monitoring INEC’s compliance with its obligations to provide assistive tools and accommodations to ensure accessible voting for persons with disabilities, as mandated by the Electoral Act 2022, Section 54, Sub-sections 1 & 2. TAF Africa will deploy twenty (20) trained stationary observers to polling units in each local government area with the highest numbers of registered persons with disabilities. In addition, five (5) roving media observers will be assigned to monitor and document INEC’s provision of assistive devices, such as Braille ballot guides for the blind, magnifying glasses for persons with albinism, large font posters for the deaf (Form EC 30 PWD), and priority voting for persons with disabilities.

TAF Africa’s observation efforts are supported by our upgraded election observer app, which facilitates real-time data transmission from observers in the field to the PWD election hub, through our election monitoring dashboard. This data-driven technology enhances the accuracy, speed, and responsiveness of our reporting, enabling timely insights into the electoral environment and compliance levels. Our observers will record data on the availability and accessibility of assistive tools, the prioritization of PWD voters, and the quality of the electoral environment. This information will provide a clear assessment of the degree to which inclusive voting standards are upheld.

### Recommendations

To facilitate an inclusive, fair, and peaceful election, TAF Africa urges the following:

- **Enhanced Security and Protection for PWDs in Electoral Flashpoints:** Security agencies should strengthen their presence in identified flashpoints, such as Idanre Local Government, to prevent violence and maintain order and provide security escorts for PWDs where necessary to ensure their safe access to polling units.

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- **Full INEC Compliance with Accessibility Standards:** We urge INEC to ensure that all necessary assistive devices, such as Braille guides, magnifying glasses, and instructions for the deaf, are available at polling units with registered PWD cluster that needs them. Priority voting for PWDs must be enforced to create a dignified voting experience.
- **Strengthen Data Collection for PWD Inclusion:** INEC should ensure disaggregated data collection and publication on PVC distribution among persons with disabilities. This data is essential for identifying gaps in electoral accessibility and fostering PWD participation.
- **Systematic Support for PWD Candidates:** Political parties should establish frameworks to support PWD candidates to counter challenges, especially last-minute pressures that may compel them to withdraw. This support is crucial to sustaining the gains of inclusivity and ensuring representative governance.
- **Address Financial Inducements in Elections:** INEC, security agencies, and anti-corruption bodies should take decisive action to prevent and penalize the use of financial inducements in the electoral process. For an election to be fair and unbiased, it is essential to make sure that voters are not unduly swayed.

While we commend the governorship candidates for signing the peace accord through the National Peace Committee on the 8th of November led by General Abdulsalami Abubakar, we urge all political stakeholders to commit to a non-violent election and respect the principles of free, fair, and inclusive elections in actions. A peaceful election will encourage broad participation and build confidence in Nigeria's democratic processes.

Through our deployment of trained observers and real-time data-driven reporting, we are poised to contribute meaningfully to ensuring that PWDs participate equally and freely in the 2024 Governorship Election. We will provide periodic updates based on observations and findings from the field.

The successful participation of PWDs in the Ondo State election will set a positive precedent for future elections, moving Nigeria closer to achieving a fully inclusive democracy.

God bless the good people of Ondo State.

Signed.

**Jake Epelle** *Fnipr*  
**CEO/Founder**  
**TAF Africa**

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## Appendix 3: Preliminary Report on the Experience of Persons with Disabilities During the Ondo State Governorship Election

Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria | Saturday, 16th November 2024

As part of our commitment to promoting the electoral rights of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Nigeria, we deployed 20 stationary citizen observers and 5 roving media observers to select polling units with registered voters with disabilities across Ondo State for today's governorship election. This deployment focused on assessing the overall experience of voters with disabilities (PWDs) and ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Electoral Act, 2022 (Section 54, Sub-sections 1 & 2).

While we commend certain efforts by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), our observations reveal critical gaps and challenges that emphasize the need for further improvements in the electoral process to ensure inclusivity and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

### Key Observations

1. **Vote Buying and Electoral Malpractice:** In numerous polling units, vote buying was conducted overtly, undermining the sanctity of the electoral process. For example, at St. David Primary School, Ijomu, Akure South, interested voters were issued coupons before proceeding to the polling booth. After voting for the preferred party of the vote sellers, voters raised their marked ballot papers for party agents to confirm. Upon verification, the agents ticked the coupons, which qualified the voters to collect monetary rewards at a designated spot. Such practices erode electoral integrity and disproportionately affect marginalized groups, including PWDs, who may face additional barriers to accessing or rejecting undue influence.
2. **Non-Provision of Assistive Tools:** INEC failed to deploy critical assistive tools at several polling units, contrary to the requirements of the Electoral Act.
  - **Braille Ballot Guide:** This was not provided in polling units with registered blind voters, such as PU St. Thomas Church 1 (PU Code 029, Gbogi/Isikan, Akure South) and Oke-Emeso Registration Area, Ward 5, Unit 008. Blind voters had to rely on assisted voting, which compromises the secrecy and independence of their vote.
  - **Magnifying Glass:** In Ward 6, Oba Ile, Akure North, a voter with albinism was initially denied priority voting and later allowed after intervention. However, the magnifying glass required for her to vote independently was not provided.
3. **Non-Deployment of Form EC 40H:** Form EC 40H, which is essential for capturing and categorizing PWD voter information and statistics, was missing in some



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polling units with registered voters with disabilities. For instance, this was observed in Igoba/Isinigbo Registration Area, Ward 5, Units 008, 022, and 028 in Akure North Local Government.

- 4. **Inconsistent Priority Voting:** While many voters with disabilities were granted priority voting, some others were not bringing about inconsistencies. TAF Africa commends the polling officials who adhered to the policy of granting priority voting to persons with disabilities in many polling units. This practice is essential to reducing the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in the voting process and should be consistently implemented.

### Recommendations

To uphold the rights of persons with disabilities and strengthen the inclusivity of future elections, we call on the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to:

- 1. **Ensure Full Deployment of Assistive Tools:** INEC must ensure the provision of Braille Ballot guides, magnifying glasses, written instructions (Form EC 30E PWD), and other necessary tools in all polling units with registered voters with disabilities.
- 2. **Enforce Electoral Integrity:** Address the pervasive issue of vote buying through stricter monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.
- 3. **Train Electoral Officers:** Provide comprehensive training for polling officials on the rights and needs of PWDs to eliminate inconsistencies in priority voting and ensure compliance with disability-inclusive policies.
- 4. **Deploy Form EC 40H Consistently:** This critical form must be made available at all polling units to collect accurate data on PWD voters and improve planning for future elections.

While some progress has been made, our observations so far highlight the urgent need for more robust measures to ensure that elections are accessible, inclusive, and equitable for persons with disabilities.

We urge INEC, civil society organizations, and all stakeholders to work together to address these challenges and build a truly inclusive electoral system.

Signed:

**Amb. Jake Epelle**  
CEO/Founder,  
TAF Africa

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## Appendix 4: Post Election Press Statement on The 2024 Ondo State Governorship Election

Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria | Sunday, 17th November 2024

As the dust settles on the Ondo State Governorship Election held yesterday, November 16, 2024, TAF Africa extends its profound gratitude to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), civil society partners, and all stakeholders who contributed to the peaceful conduct of the 2024 Ondo State Governorship Elections. As an organization committed to enhancing the participation of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in political and electoral processes, we deployed 20 stationary citizen observers and 5 roving media observers across polling units with registered PWD voters to assess the inclusivity of this election.

Our observation mission was guided by a singular goal: to evaluate the compliance of INEC with the provisions of the Electoral Act (Section 54, Subsections 1 & 2) for inclusive elections, which mandate the deployment of assistive tools and the prioritization of PWD voters. While this election presented an opportunity to reinforce inclusive democratic practices, the findings from our team paint a concerning picture that requires urgent attention if Nigeria is to achieve a truly inclusive democratic process.

### KEY FINDINGS

**1. Rampant Vote Buying and Electoral Malpractices**

Our observers documented widespread and brazen acts of vote buying. For instance, at St. David Primary School, Ijomu, Akure South, interested voters were given coupons that were ticked by party agents after confirming their ballots, and monetary rewards were given at a designated spot. This unacceptable practice undermines the credibility of our elections and diminishes voter trust.

**2. Inadequate Deployment of Assistive Tools for PWDs**

Despite explicit legal mandates, critical assistive tools such as Braille ballot guides and magnifying glasses were glaringly absent in polling units with registered blind voters and voters with albinism. This was observed in St. Thomas Church 1, PU Code 029 Gbogi/Isikan in Akure South, Oke-Emeso Ward 5 Unit 008, and others across Ondo State. Blind voters were forced to rely on assisted voting, undermining their right to privacy and independence.

**3. Partial Deployment of Form EC 40H**

Form EC 40H, critical for accurately documenting PWD voter information and statistics, was not deployed in multiple polling units, including Ward 5 Units 008, 22, and 28 in Akure North. This gap hinders the accurate representation of PWDs in electoral records and the planning of future elections.

**4. Denial of Priority Voting Rights in some polling units**

While priority voting was commendably upheld in some polling units, violations were reported. In Ward 6, Oba Ile, Akure North, a person with albinism was initially denied priority voting until our observers intervened. Similarly, in Polling Unit 4, Ward 2, Ode



Irele, a voter with a physical disability had to wait until the queue was reduced before being allowed to vote.

5. **Inaccessibility in Some Polling Units**

Instances of inaccessibility were recorded in some polling units including Ile-Oluji/Okeigbo Local Government, Oke-Igbo 1, Polling Unit 13, where a little person was unable to insert their ballot paper independently due to the height of the ballot box, and it was not lowered to enable his independent participation. Similarly, an elderly voter with physical disability in Open space Opposite mango tree 1 PU code 20, Ondo West local government area faced significant mobility challenges due to the absence of transportation on election day and the long distances he had to walk to get to his polling unit.

6. **Low Voter Turnout**

Voter turnout was notably low, signalling potential voter apathy, which could worsen if systemic barriers to participation are not addressed.

7. **Security Concerns**

Ballot box snatching was reported in Ofosu/Onisere Ward, Idanre LGA, threatening the safety and security of voters, especially persons with disabilities, who are disproportionately affected by electoral violence.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

To address the systemic challenges highlighted above, TAF Africa calls on key stakeholders to take the following actions:

1. **Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)**

- Ensure full compliance with the Electoral Act by deploying all assistive tools, including Braille Ballot Guides, magnifying glasses, and Form EC 40H, in all polling units with registered PWDs in subsequent elections.
- Strengthen the training of election officials to prioritize PWD voters and enforce compliance with disability-inclusive provisions.
- Strengthen measures to curb vote buying, including enhanced monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.
- Invest in public awareness around the provisions of the electoral act in line with the participation of persons with disabilities in electoral processes.
- Invest in the redesign of polling infrastructure to guarantee accessibility for PWDs, including ballot boxes and pathways.

2. **Government and Policy Makers**

- Collaborate with stakeholders to develop accessible transportation systems on election days, ensuring mobility for PWDs and the elderly.
- Strengthen existing electoral laws to include stricter penalties for non-compliance with disability inclusion mandates.



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3. **Civil Society Organizations and Development Partners**
  - Facilitate voter mobilization and education efforts to counter voter apathy, with a focus on disability inclusion.
  - Monitor and report on the compliance of electoral processes with disability inclusion standards.
4. **Political Parties**
  - Commit to supporting PWD candidates through mentorship, funding, and capacity-building programs to enhance their representation.
  - Promote accountability by discouraging the commercialization of votes and other malpractices among party agents.
5. **Media**
  - Scale up the mainstreaming of disability inclusion in election coverage to spotlight the challenges and successes of PWD voters.
  - Advocate for PWD participation in governance and electoral processes.
6. **Security Agencies**
  - Address electoral violence and intimidation to create a safe environment for all voters, particularly vulnerable populations.
  - Investigate and prosecute individuals involved in vote trading and electoral malpractice at the polls.
7. **Persons with disabilities**
  - Register with political parties and vie for elective positions in subsequent elections to increase the number of PWDs representation in elective positions.

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The Ondo State Governorship Election has illuminated significant gaps in the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Nigeria’s electoral process. While commendable efforts, such as occasional instances of priority voting, were observed, these were overshadowed by widespread violations of PWD rights. TAF Africa reiterates its commitment to advocating for an electoral system that truly embodies the principles of equity, accessibility, and inclusivity.

As Nigeria prepares for future elections, we urge all stakeholders to prioritize disability inclusion not as an afterthought but as a cornerstone of democratic integrity. The time for action is now.

Thank you.

Signed:

**Amb. Jake Epelle**  
CEO/Founder,  
TAF Africa

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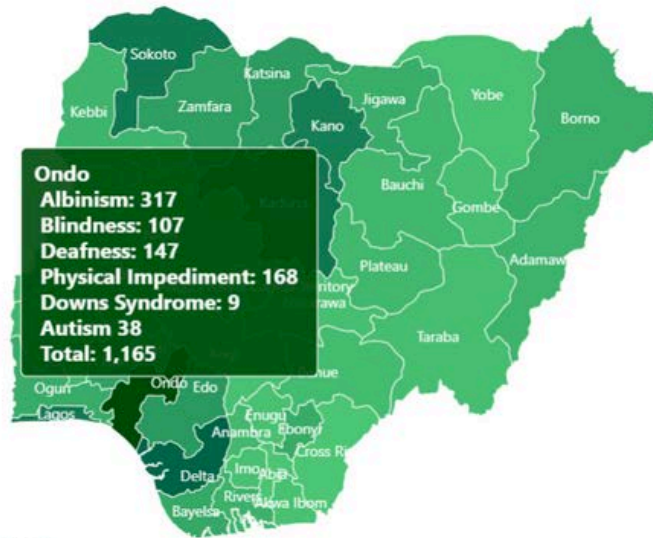


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## Appendix 5: TAF Election Observer Dashboard

### Eligible Voters With Disabilities in Nigeria

The map showcases the number of registered PWD voters for the 2023 elections. The lightly shaded states have the smallest numbers and the states with darkest shades have the largest numbers.



Map : TAF Africa • Source: INEC

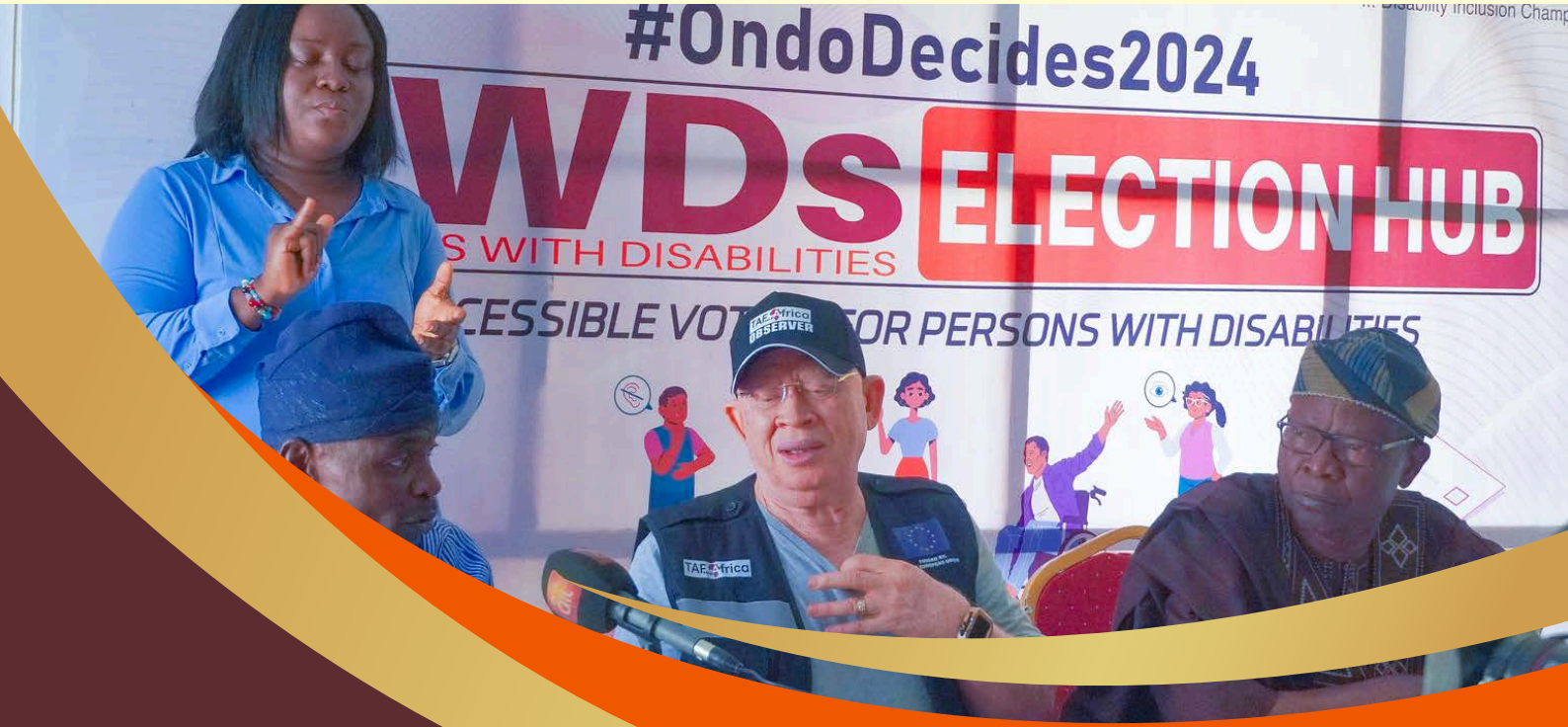
Source: TAF Election Observer Dashboard  
(<https://electionhub.org.ng/pwd/>)



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