



FROM APATHY TO ACTION

A REFORM BLUEPRINT FOR SIECS & COMMUNITY-LEVEL DEMOCRACY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HEDA Resource Centre gratefully acknowledges every hand that turned the June 2025 Leadership Approval Rating (**LAR**) from concept to country-wide reality. From project conception by the organisation, to MacArthur Foundation who believed in our vision and funded it into reality.

We particularly appreciate the implementing team of this project which comprises of the members of the program team of the organization who drafted the concept for this edition of the LAR and also coordinated the implementation for this project. Our network of volunteers who are always willing and ready to answer whenever we call on them and deployed their respective contacts in all the 36 states of the federation and the FCT got the desired responses which formed the data that resulted in this report. We are eternally grateful to our partners and networks who are always there whenever we call on them, for without them this project which centres on the 'voices of the people' will not be as seamless as it was.

We also recognise the efforts and contributions of the team that cleaned up the data, analyse same, proofread, edit, designed and turned it into this beautiful narrative report worth presenting as an outcome of this initiative.

Finally, and without mincing, we re-iterate our heartfelt thank you to every member of HEDA's national staff and volunteer network whose commitment, logistics support and community engagement ensured that 1,423 voices from all 36 states and the FCT were heard loud and clear.

PREFACE

Since its launch in 2019, the Leadership Approval Rating (LAR) series has tracked how Nigerians assess key public institutions. Earlier editions examined police accountability, public health delivery and most recently, in April 2025 the judiciary. Each cycle has followed the same principle: let citizens, not elites, set the scorecard and the reform agenda.

The current edition turns the lens on State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) bodies created to protect the vote at the level closest to the people. Yet the data in this report are stark: 87 % of respondents recognise SIECs as the legal umpire, but only 45 % believe the commissions are truly independent, and barely 41 % trust them to run a free and fair poll.

These figures echo the messages heard across previous LAR studies: transparency and independence are the non-negotiables of public trust and where they are weak, legitimacy collapses.

The survey also supplies a roadmap forward: truly autonomous SIECs, tech-driven transparency, and stiff oversight penalties, paired with grassroots voter education that closes information gaps and deters manipulation.

These are not abstract proposals; they come from market women in Onitsha, mechanics in Katsina, students in Calabar, professionals in Lagos, and teachers in Gombe. They understand the cost of a broken system: poor service delivery, and elite capture. They also understand the opportunity fix local polls and governance becomes visible, responsive, and accountable.

HEDA presents this report in the spirit of constructive engagement. It speaks in the plain, evidence-driven tone long championed by the organisation: facts first, rights protected, officials held to account. The numbers are now on the table; the onus rests on state governments, SIECs, security agencies, National and Houses of Assembly as well as political parties to act. Anything less will leave grassroots democracy and with it, Nigeria's wider democratic project hanging in the balance.

Olanrewaju Suraju
Chairman, HEDA Resource Centre
June 2025

ACRONYMS USED IN THE REPORT

Acronym	Full Meaning
LAR	Leadership Approval Rating
SIEC	States Independent Electoral Commission
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
LG / LGA	Local Government / Local Government Area
CSO	Civil Society Organization
BVAS	Bimodal Voter Accreditation System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
Gen-Z	Generation Z (youth cohort)

KEY INSIGHTS AT A GLANCE

(Drawn from 1,423 voices across Nigeria's 36 states + FCT, June 2025 LAR survey)

- **Youth Front-line** – 59 % of respondents are under 35; grassroots reform must speak Gen-Z/Young-Millennial.
- **Balanced Bench** – 46 % female, 54 % male: gender-inclusive findings, not a one-sided rant.
- **Sky-High Literacy** – 92 % hold tertiary certificates; feedback is informed, not street gossip.

- **Public Know the Umpire** – 87 % correctly name SIEC as the body that runs LG polls, yet 39 % have never voted: awareness does not equate to turnout.
- **Performance Scorecard** – Only 44 % grade their SIEC “Good/Excellent”; 24 % tag it “Poor/Very Poor.” Mediocrity is the middle name.
- **Transparency on a Knife-Edge** – 36 % see elections as at least “somewhat transparent,” 35 % say “not transparent.” A one-point stalemate.
- **Independence in Doubt** – 45 % believe SIECs are free from governor control; 55 % either disagree or don't know.
- **Trust Deficit** – Just 41 % trust SIECs to deliver a fair poll; legitimacy is fragile.
- **Engagement Gaps**
 - Voter education: only 26 % rate SIEC outreach “very well.”
 - Observer presence: 30 % notice election monitors at LG elections; this is silence where scrutiny should be loud.
- **Top-Ranked Headache** – 48.5 % cite *lack of independence* as the No. 1 challenge; voter education (17 %), and insecurity/logistics (8 %) lag far behind.
- **“Let INEC Handle It”** – A clear 55 % majority want the federal umpire to take over LG polls; confidence in state bodies is on life-support and federalism under threat.
- **Citizen Fix-List (1,878 recommendations)**
 - 39.6 %: Vague frustration – proof of deep frustration with the system.
 - 17.8 %: Demand real SIEC autonomy.
 - 11.6 %: Tech for live, tamper-proof results.
 - 9.9 %: Grass-roots voter education.
 - 6.5 %: Scrap SIECs, hand the job to INEC.

Bottom Line: Nigerians aren't asking for tweaks; they want a reboot. Cut political strings, hard-wire transparency, fund logistics, and put security on the ballot – or expect the electorate to keep voting with their feet.

SECTION 1

Introduction and Methodology

1.1. Introduction

Local government is the tier of governance that should sit closest to citizens, yet, for millions of Nigerians, it remains the most distant. With Lagos State set to elect council chairpersons and councillors on 12 July 2025, the Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA Resource Centre) took the opportunity to ask Nigerians a simple question: *“How credible are local-government elections, and what must change?”* Between 21 May – 4 June 2025, 1,423 respondents from every state and the FCT shared their experiences and recommendations.

Their answers form the backbone of this Leadership Approval Rating (LAR) – June 2025 report. The findings go far beyond Lagos. They reveal a politically aware but frustrated public that is ready to participate—if the process can earn their confidence. From the dominance of youth voices to the stark regional similarities in complaints, the data challenge state authorities, electoral managers, political parties, and civil-society actors to rethink how local democracy is organised, funded and policed. This document distils the numbers into clear insights and, more importantly, into a public agenda for reforms that can no longer be ignored.

1.2. Survey Methodology

(Applicable to the June 2025 Local-Government Elections & SIEC Perception Survey – “LAR June 2025” edition)

COMPONENT	APPROACH
Research Objective	To measure public awareness, participation, trust and reform demands around State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) and local-government elections in Nigeria. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Structured questionnaire (closed & open-ended items).Drafted by HEDA Resource Centre research team, peer reviewed for clarity and neutrality.Pilot test conducted randomly before full rollout.
Instrument Design	
Target Population	Adult Nigerians (18 +) residing in all 36 states and the FCT.
Sample Size	1,423 completed interviews – large enough to detect state-level patterns and national trends. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Simple random sampling within each state to minimise selection bias.Minimum 30 responses per state achieved; high-population states over sampled for robustness.
Sampling Technique	
Data-Collection Period	21 May – 4 June, 2025
Survey Mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Secure online link administered by HEDA volunteers

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SECTION 2

Who Did We
Hear From?

1,423 Nigerians, every state, every zone — and youth are leading the charge

Before we debate trust, rigging or reform, it is imperative to know those voices on the record. The June 2025 LAR survey logged 1,423 valid responses from all 36 states and the FCT, giving us a genuinely national picture—far beyond the Lagos–Abuja echo chambers.

What we gathered are clear:

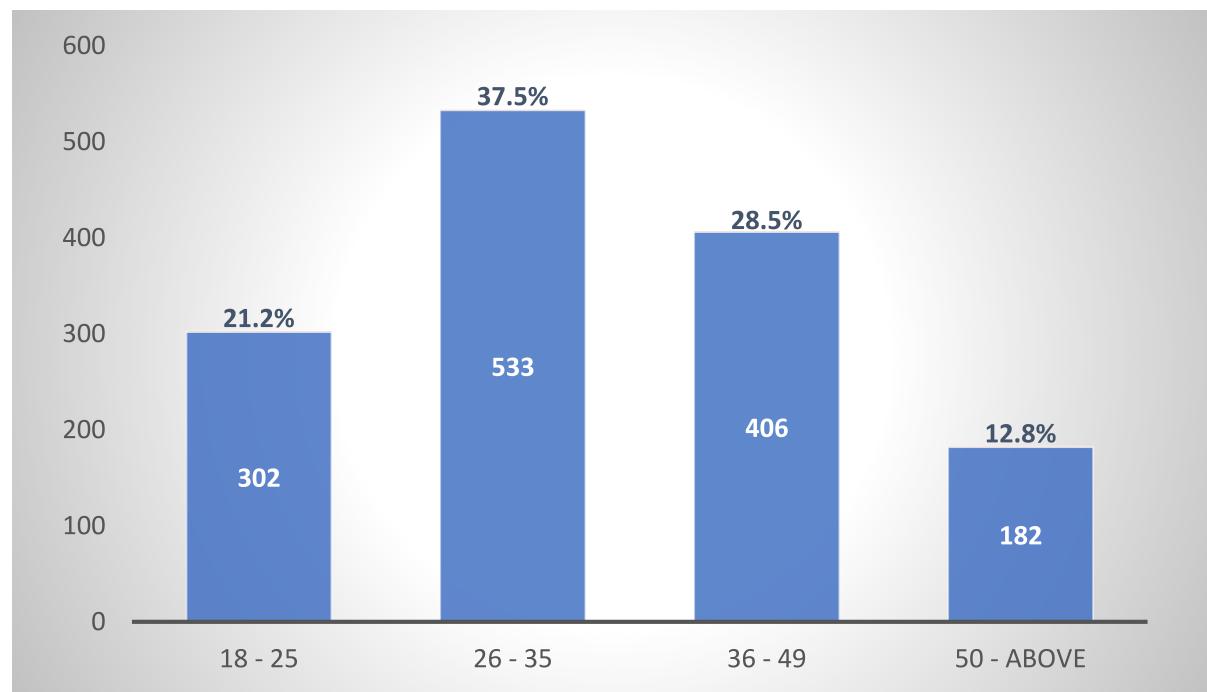
- Youth power: Nearly 59 percent of respondents are under 35.
- Gender balance: Roughly one woman for every man.
- Highly educated: Over nine out of ten hold a tertiary qualification.
- Nationwide spread: No zone is missing; the top-response states range from Abia (59) to Zamfara (53).

These aren't random grumblers; they're informed citizens telling government, “We see the system — and we are ready for a better one.”

2.1. Age Distribution

Key fact: 58.7 % (835 of 1,423) are under 35.

Chart 1: Age band count % of respondents

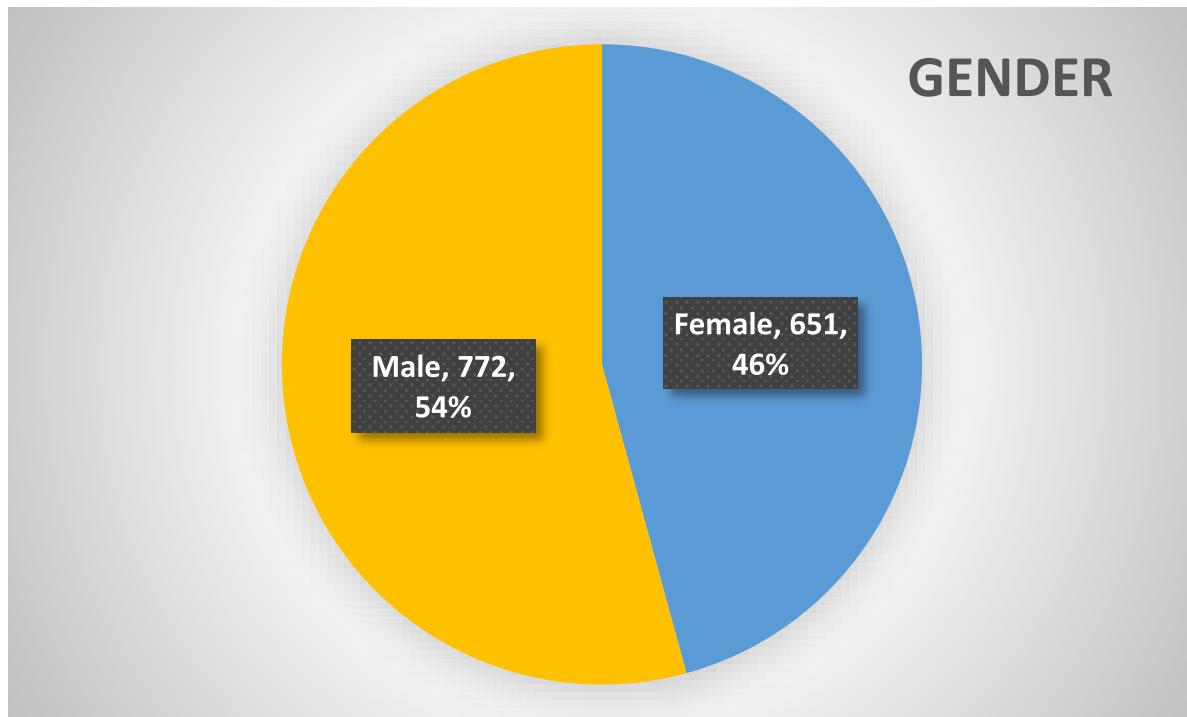


Local-government credibility is first and foremost a youth issue. Almost six in ten voices come from the 18-35 bracket, giving reform demands serious generational weight. Older cohorts (41 %) are still in the mix, but the centre of gravity sits firmly with Nigeria's emerging electorate.

2.2. Gender Breakdown

Key fact: Gender doesn't skew the conversation — it balances it. Nearly one woman for every man took part.

Chart 2: Gender of respondents

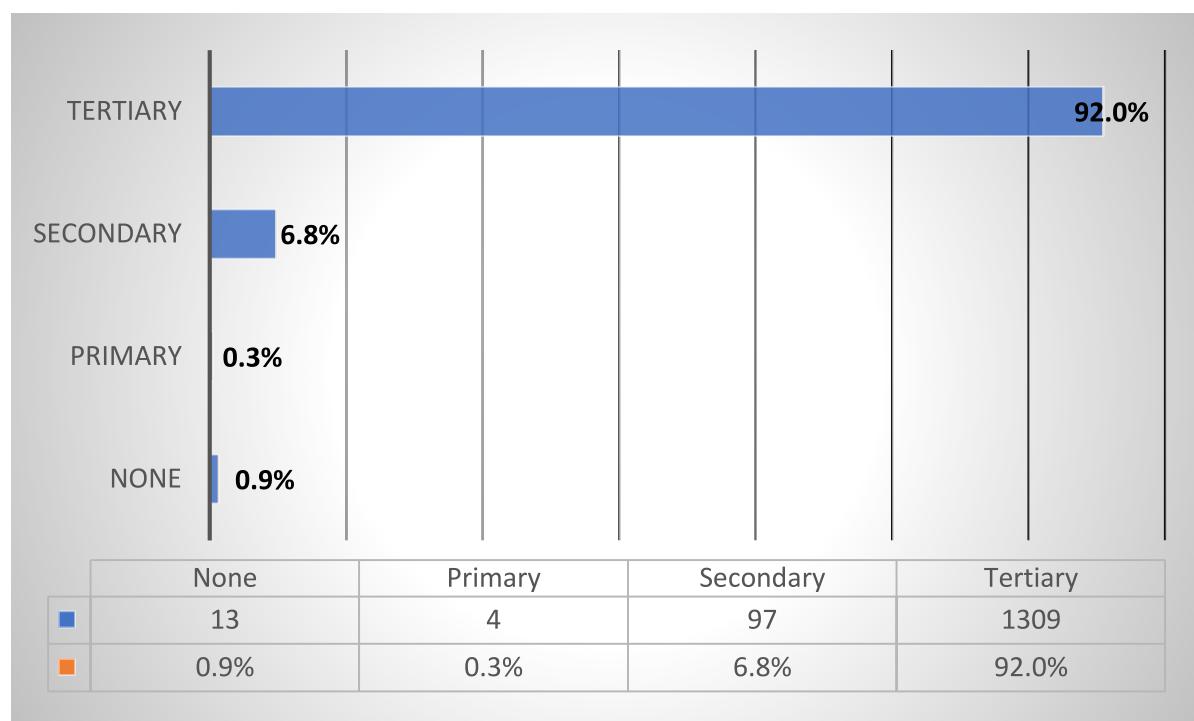


With 46 % female and 54 % male respondents, the gender split in this survey is nearly even. This means that issues like access, safety, and participation reflect both male and female perspectives fairly. Insights drawn from this sample are not just representative — they're inclusive.

2.3 Education Level

Key fact: More than 9 out of 10 respondents hold a tertiary qualification.

Chart 3: Educational levels of respondents



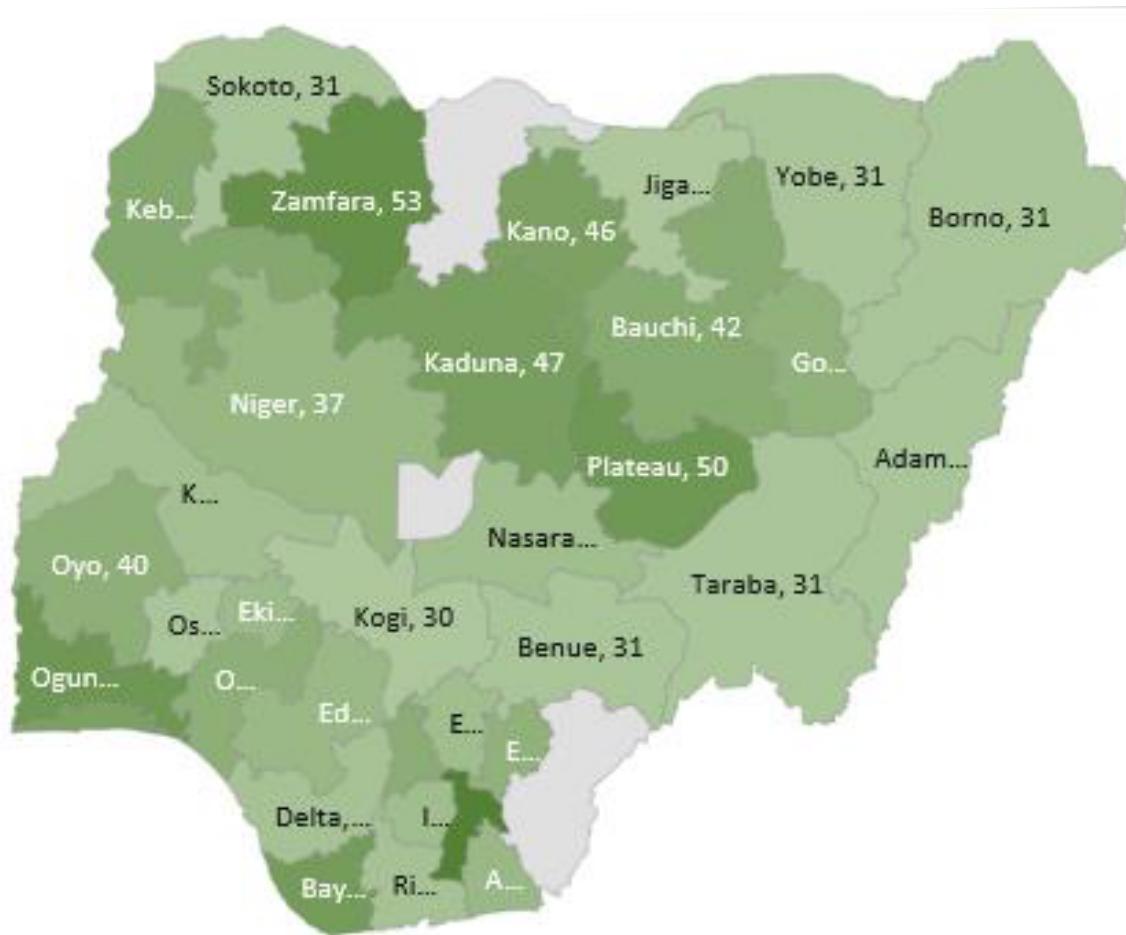
This dataset benefits immensely from the depth of its respondents. With 92% holding tertiary qualifications, the findings represent insights from Nigerians with the capacity to engage critically with governance and electoral processes. This literacy advantage is a strength as it sharpens the quality of feedback and ensures that recommendations offered later are not just emotional reactions, but informed proposals grounded in civic understanding. The data offers a well-educated lens into how credible or flawed people perceive local government elections to be—and what they expect from reforms.

2.4 Geographic Spread

Key facts:

- Every state logged at least 30 responses.
- Top-volume states: Abia (59), Zamfara (53), Plateau & Ogun (50 each), Lagos & Kano (46 each).

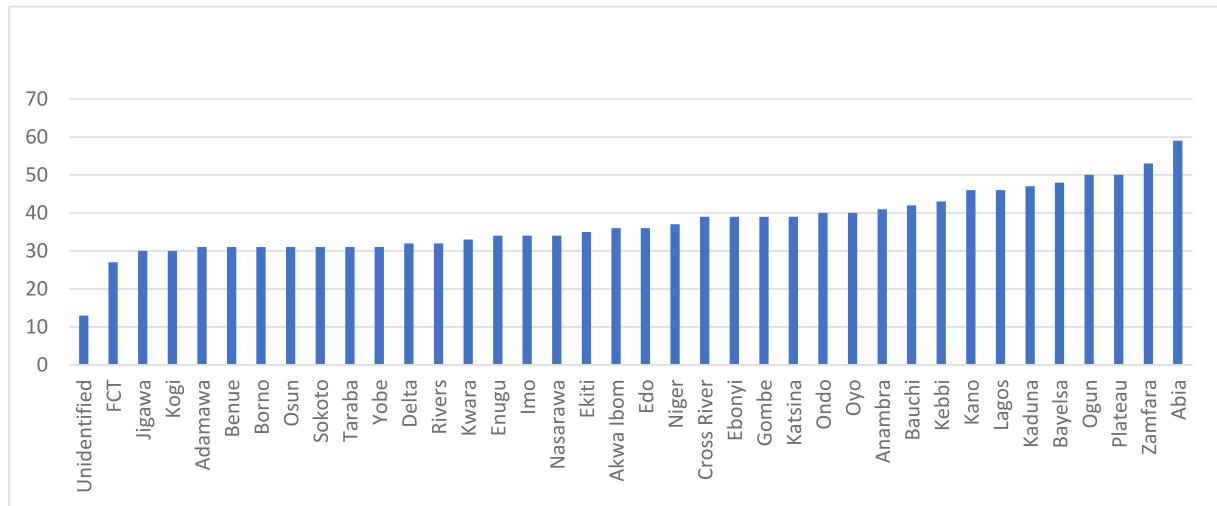
Chart 4: Geographic spread of respondents



A complete national reach strengthens the credibility of this analysis. Responses received from all 36 states of Nigeria and the FCT, meaning no region is invisible in the conversation and expression of experience. From Abia to Zamfara, every geopolitical zone is represented — North, South, East, and West. This eliminates regional bias and ensures that findings are not skewed by overconcentration in urban or elite areas.

Chart 5: States with higher responses

Key fact: Top-volume states: Abia (59), Zamfara (53), Plateau & Ogun (50 each), Lagos & Kano (46 each).



In short: when every state speaks, the message carries national weight.

2.5 Section Conclusions

- Youth dominance: Any fix must speak to a tech-savvy, sceptical generation.
- Gender balance: Female perspectives are robust enough for policy use.

SECTION 3

Awareness &
Participation

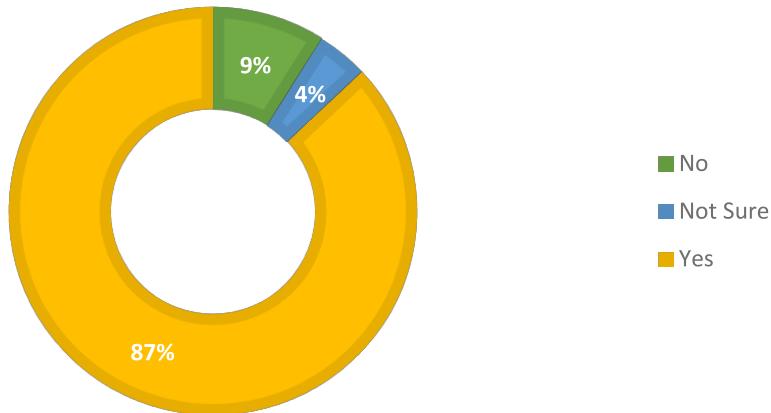
People know the umpire—but many still stay home

If ignorance were the problem, awareness campaigns would fix local elections overnight. That's not the case under the current circumstance. Eighty-seven percent of respondents can name SIEC as the body in charge, yet four in ten have never voted in a local-government poll. The gap isn't information; it's confidence.

3.1 Awareness of SIEC's Mandate

Key fact: 87 % know SIECs run local polls.

Chart 6 — Are you aware that SIEC is responsible for conducting local government elections in each state?

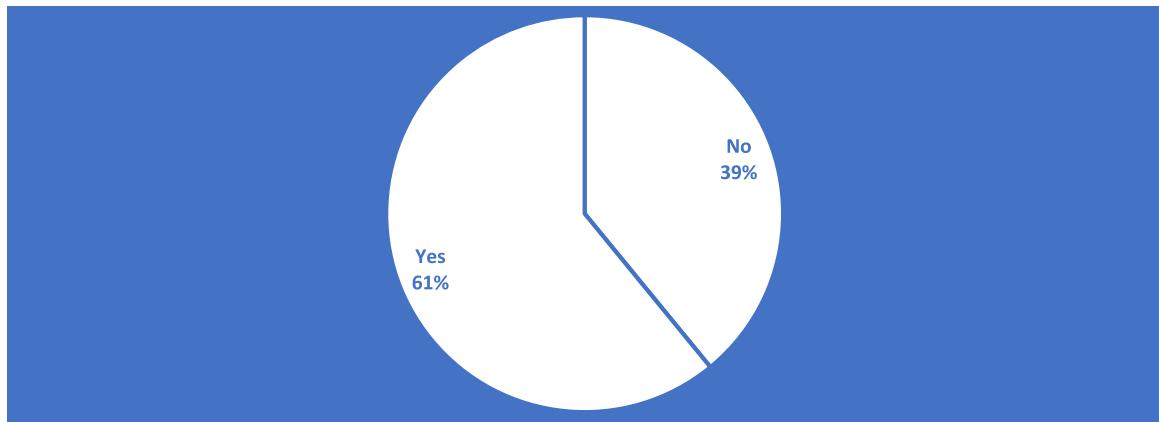


Nigerians aren't guessing—they know exactly who the umpire is: 1,238 out of 1,423 can name SIEC as the body in charge. That sky-high 87% awareness is an asset and a warning: citizens are informed enough to judge performance, and they are keeping score. For reformers, this means no costly “sensitisation” warm-ups; the public is already tuned in—what they want now is credibility, not orientation.

3.2 Has Ever Voted in a Local Government Election

Key fact: 39 % have never voted in an LG election.

Chart 7 — Have you ever voted in a local government election?

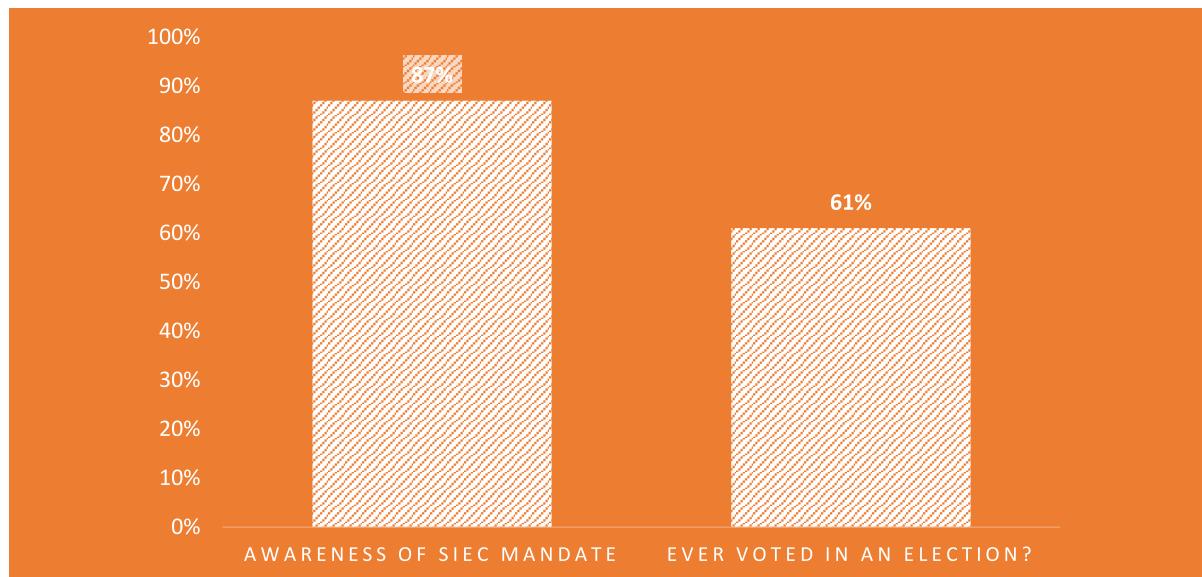


Despite that sky-high awareness, 556 respondents—39 percent of the sample—admit they've never cast a ballot in a local-government poll. Despite high awareness, more than a third of eligible voters have stayed away. That's not apathy alone; it's a verdict. High knowledge paired with low turnout signals a credibility crisis: people know the referee; they just don't trust the match is fair. In other words, the boycott is the message—voters are withholding participation until the system proves their time (and vote) will actually count.

Later data on trust and performance suggest many doubt the process is worth their time.

3.3 Awareness–Participation Gap

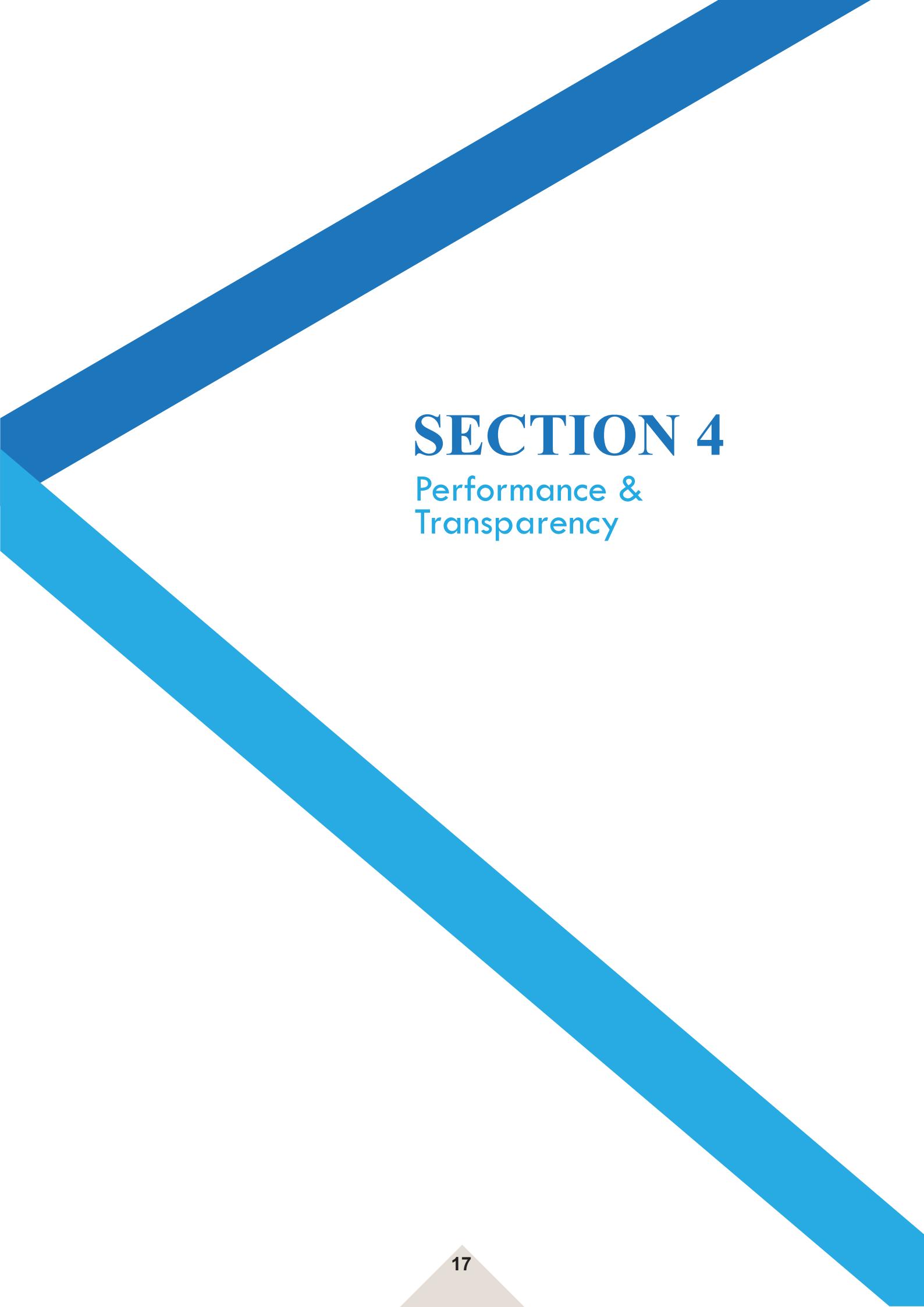
Chart 8 — Awareness Vs Participation



A 26-point gap separates knowledge from action. Bridging it will require more than radio jingles—it demands visible fairness that convinces first-time voters their ballots will count.

3.4 Section Conclusions

- High civic literacy: Nigerians know the rules and the referee.
- Credibility deficit: Information alone hasn't driven turnout; trust is the missing link SIECs must earn back.



SECTION 4

Performance & Transparency

What are people really saying about how SIECs are performing?

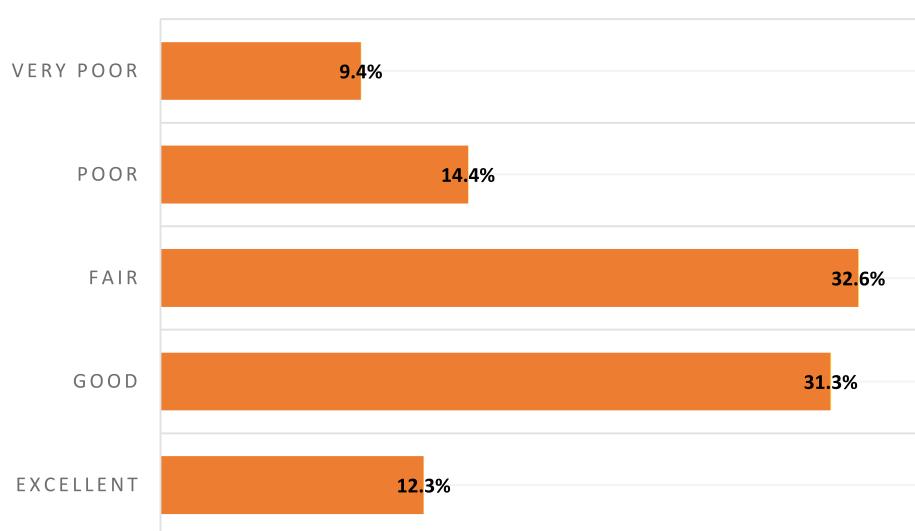
When Nigerians talk about the State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs), they are not confused. They have observed the operations of these commissions for years — and their verdicts are not flattering. While a few assessed the performances of the commissions as good, many others adjudged them as just average or outright poor. And when it comes to transparency — the question of whether things are done in the open or behind closed doors — Nigerians appear clearly split in their decisions.

This section looks at how people rate the overall performance of SIECs and whether they think these elections are conducted in transparent ways.

4.1 Overall Performance of SIECs

Key Fact: Just 43% of respondents rate SIECs as “Good” or “Excellent.”

Chart 9 – How would you rate the overall performance of SIEC in your state?

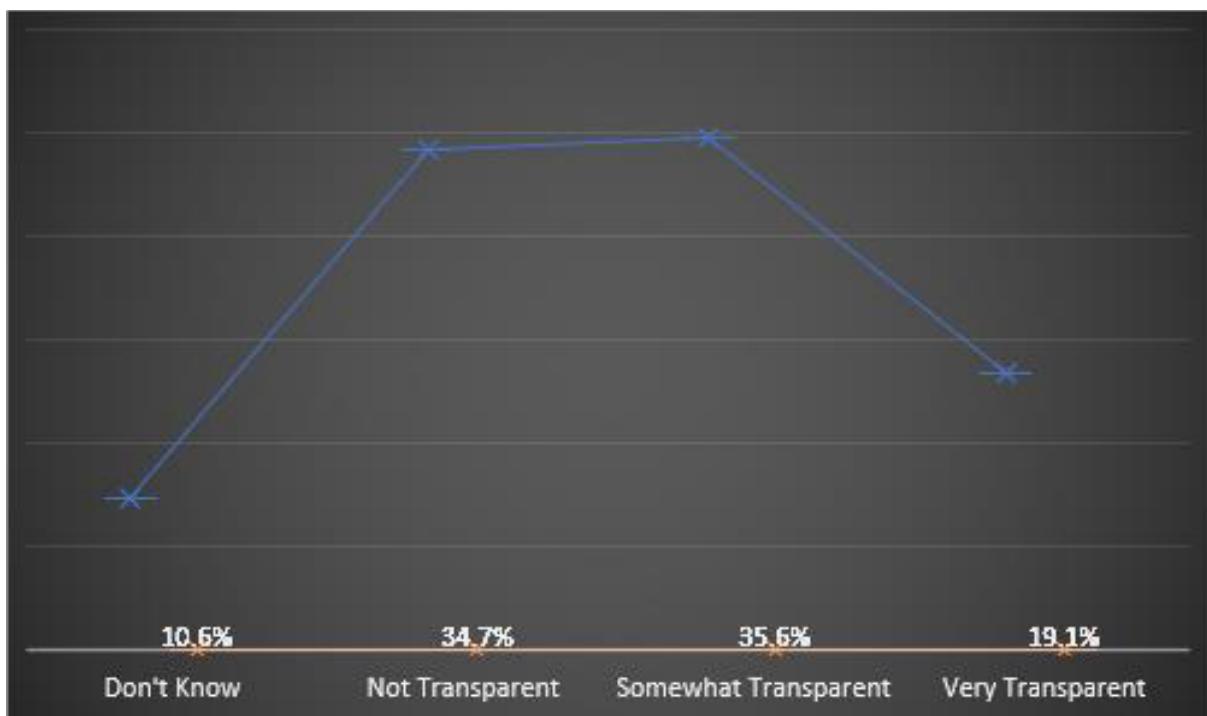


Most Nigerians don't think their state election commissions are doing great work. About one-third said the performance is just “fair,” while another 24% believe it is *poor* or *very poor*. Only a small group — about 12% — felt the performance has been excellent. This reveals that many people have not seen enough justification to build confidence in these institutions.

4.2 Do Nigerians Think Elections Are Transparent?

Key Fact: Nigerians are split—almost evenly—on whether elections are transparent.

Chart 10 – From your experience or perception, how transparent do you consider SIEC's conduct of local government elections?



While 36% believe elections are at least “somewhat transparent,” another 35% said they are not transparent at all. This shows a country divided on whether it can trust what happens on election day. The difference between the two groups is small — just 0.9 percentage points — meaning the public's confidence in election transparency is hanging by a thread.

4.3 Section Conclusions

Lukewarm scorecard: Less than half see their SIEC as “Good/Excellent,” while one-quarter label performance poor—credibility is stuck in neutral.

Transparency on a knife-edge: Public opinion splits almost evenly between “somewhat open” and “not transparent,” proving that a single bad—or good—election could swing trust decisively.

SECTION 5

Trust, Independence & Public Engagement

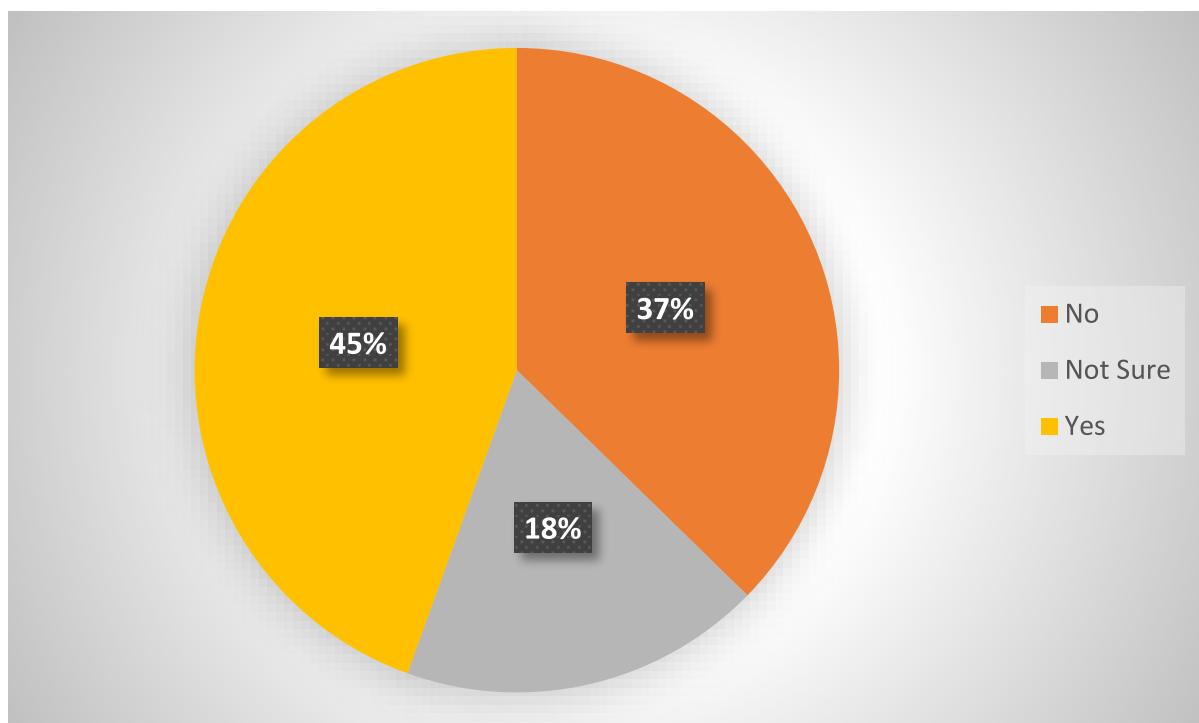
Can Nigerians trust the system?

This section takes a deeper look at how people feel about the independence of SIECs — that is, whether these bodies are truly neutral or still under the control of State Governors. It also looks at public trust in these commissions and whether the public feels involved — through voter education, media reporting, and election monitoring.

5.1 Do People Believe SIECs Are Independent?

Key Fact: Over half of the respondents either do not believe SIECs are independent or are not sure.

Chart 11 – Do you consider SIEC independent from state government's control?

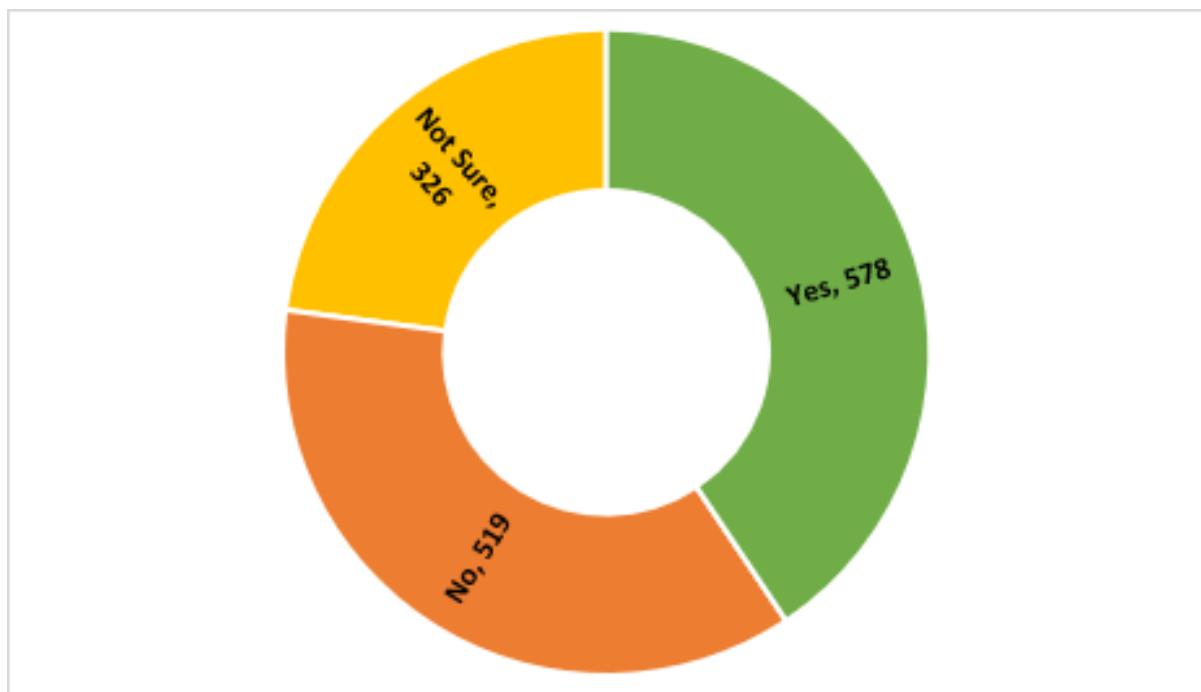


Only 45% believe that SIECs are truly independent. The rest either don't believe it or are unsure. This shows that people are worried about state governments having too much influence over local elections.

5.2 Trust in SIECs to Deliver Credible Elections

Key Fact: Only 4 in 10 people say they trust SIECs to deliver credible local elections.

Chart 12 – Do you trust SIEC to conduct free and fair local government elections?

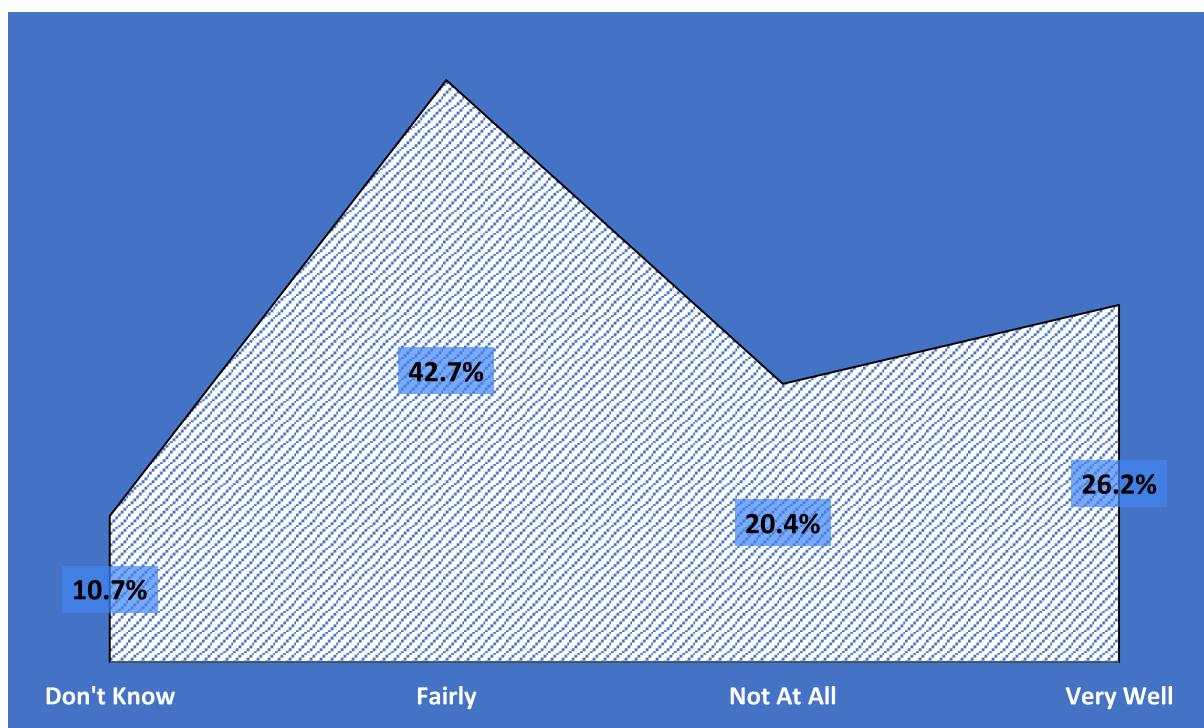


Just 41% of people say they trust SIECs to run free and fair local government elections. That means most Nigerians either don't believe in the system or are unsure. Without trust, even the best-run election will struggle to convince the public.

5.3 Public Engagement Scorecard

5.3.1 Voter Education by SIEC

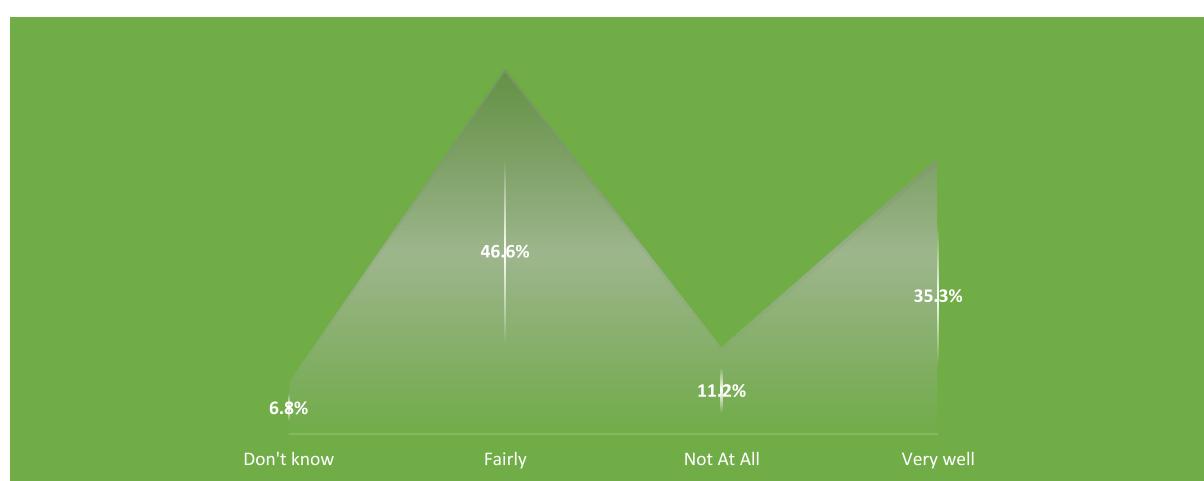
Chart 13 – How well do you think SIEC engage with the public or educate citizens before and during elections?



Only 26% of Nigerians think voter education by SIECs is people-oriented and participatory. About 43% say it's done "fairly," and 20% say it does not happen at all. That is a big gap, especially when many voters still do not know their rights or how local elections work.

5.3.2 Media Coverage of LG Elections

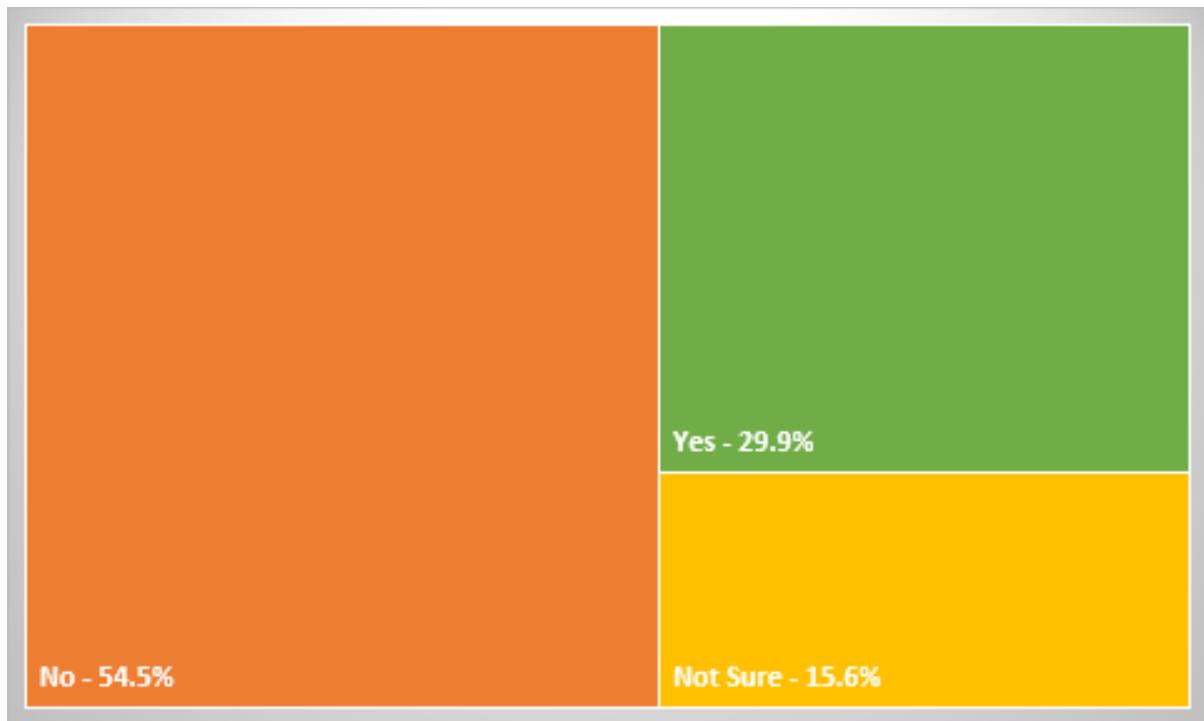
Chart 14 – How well do you think media has been actively involved in local government election process?



About 82% of respondents say the media has done a decent job covering local elections. This is better than SIECs' own voter education, showing that journalists may be doing more to inform the public than the official agencies.

5.3.3 Election Observation

Chart 15 – Do you think local government elections are given enough attention by local and international observers?

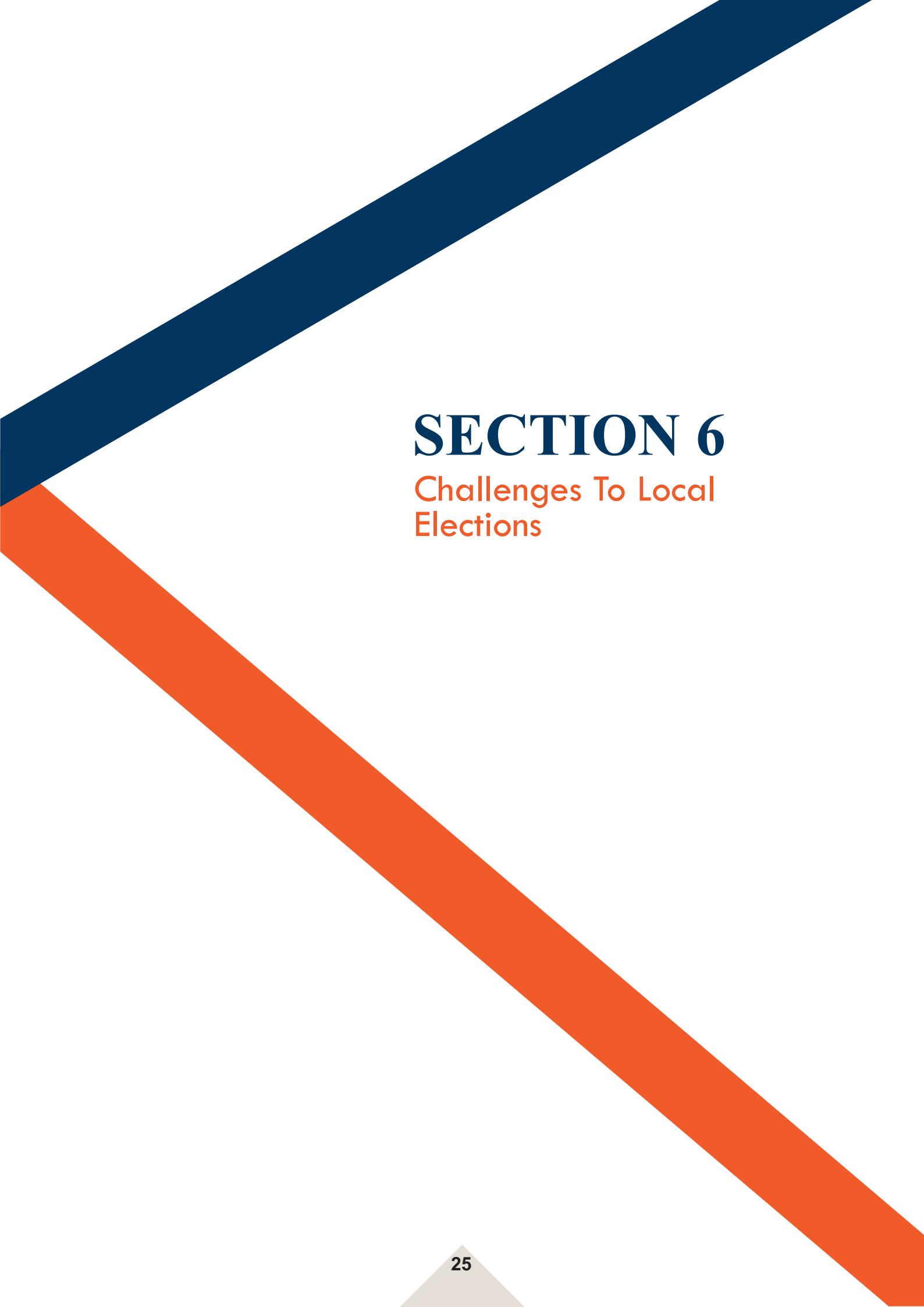


5.4 Section Conclusions

Independence in doubt: A majority (55 %) either rejects or questions SIEC autonomy, signalling that governors' shadows still loom over local polls.

Trust deficit: With only 41 % expressing confidence in SIECs, legitimacy remains fragile—no amount of logistics will fix an election citizens do not believe in.

The media is doing more outreach than the election bodies themselves.



SECTION 6

Challenges To Local Elections

What is wrong with the system?

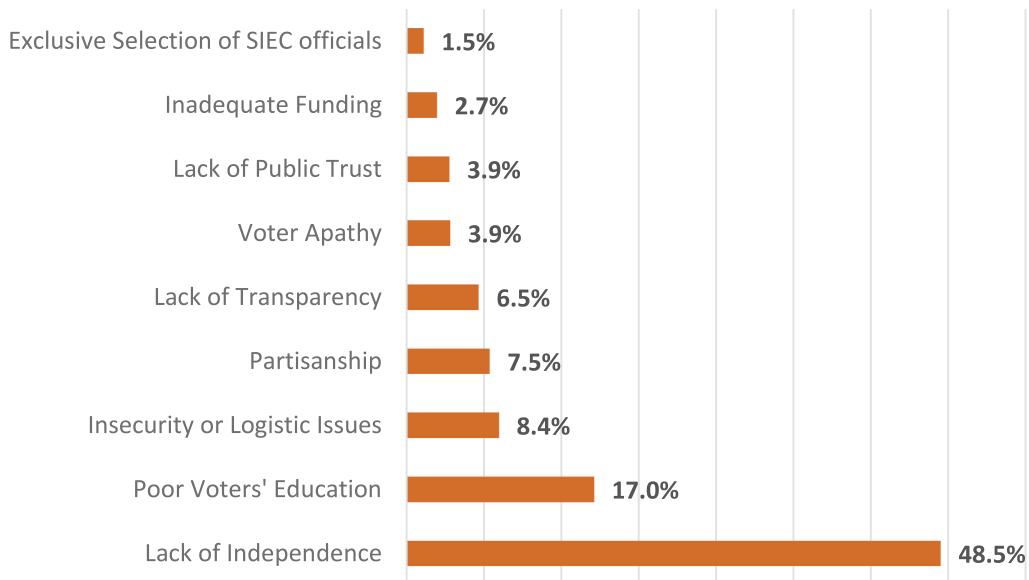
When asked about the biggest challenges facing local government elections, Nigerians had strong and clear opinions. Almost half of them — 49% — said the biggest issue is the lack of independence of SIECs. Other issues like voter education, insecurity, and transparency also came up, but nothing came close to the call for more independence.

6.1 Biggest Challenges Identified

Key Fact: Nearly half (48.5%) of all respondents believe that SIECs lack real independence from political control.

The biggest complaint? They are not truly independent. The numbers confirm what many feel — SIECs are perceived as political tools, not neutral referees. And while transparency, logistics, and voter education matter, they all trail far behind the number one issue: Governors are still pulling the strings.

Chart 16 – What challenges do you associate with SIEC? (Check all that applies)



The challenge data reads like a report card for failure:

- 48.5% say SIECs lack independence.
- 17% say there is little to no voter education.
- 8.4% cite insecurity and logistical chaos.
- 7.5% complain of open partisanship.
- 6.5% say transparency is missing.

The perception that SIECs are controlled by State Governors runs through every complaint. Whether it is poor communication, chaotic logistics, or outright partisanship, respondents believe the system is designed to deliver one outcome — victory for the ruling party.

Add in voter apathy (3.9%) and lack of trust (3.9%), and it is clear: even those who show up don't believe it will count.

Then there is the funding question. Only 2.7% mentioned inadequate financing, showing that for most Nigerians, the problem is not money — it is control.

And when 1.5% still raised alarm over SIECs officials' secret appointment outside citizens participation or contributions towards the process, the deeper message becomes clear: SIECs are not considered umpires. They are perceived as the referee on the payroll of one team.

Bottom line?

Before you train more staff or print better ballot papers, cut the puppet strings. Because without independence, no reform will be sufficient.

6.2 Section Conclusions

Independence and trust go together. If people do not believe the process is neutral, they would not vote or take results seriously—fix that or nothing else sticks.

Everything else is a symptom: Weak voter education, security lapses, and blatant partisanship all flow from that single chokepoint.

SECTION 7

**“Just Scrap It”:
The Case For Inec To
Take Over Local Elections**

INEC or SIEC: Who do Nigerians really trust?

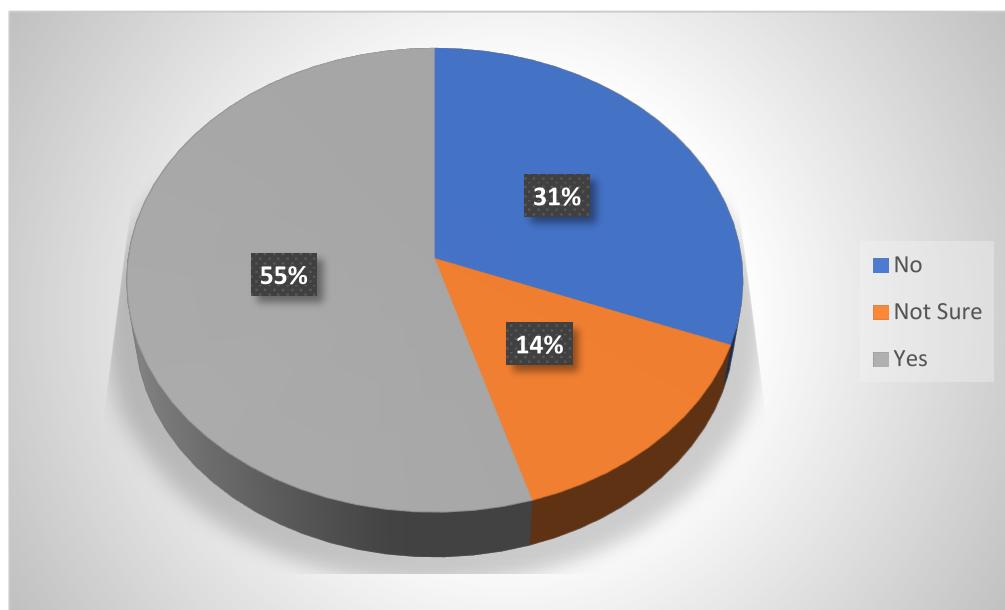
There is a growing call across the country to shift local government elections away from state electoral commissions. For many Nigerians, SIECs are simply not credible anymore. The public is saying: enough is enough.

Over half of respondents are pushing for INEC — Nigeria's federal electoral body — to take charge. They argue this will bring greater professionalism, neutrality, and standardisation to an electoral process long plagued by state-level interference. This has implications for independence of federating units in Nigeria's practice of federal system of government.

This section captures just how widespread that sentiment is. This section asks a simple question: who should oversee local elections — the current SIECs or the national electoral body, INEC?

7.1 Should INEC Take Over Local Government Elections?

Chart 17 – Should INEC take over responsibilities of local government elections for better coordination and performance?



The results are unambiguous: more than one in every two respondents wants INEC to take full charge of local government elections.

- At 55%, this is the single largest majority for any reform question in the entire LAR survey.
- Only 31% says SIECs should retain control.
- The remaining 14% are unsure, which means there is room to convince them either way. But clearly, the current system has lost public confidence.

The takeaway? Confidence in state electoral commissions has eroded so badly that the electorate is now betting on centralisation and ultimately unitary system of government.

The numbers are a wake-up call. Through this leadership assessment, Nigerians are effectively voting with their voices — for a federal rescue of grassroots democracy.

Section Conclusions:

- Citizens want INEC to step in, or for SIECs to be reformed beyond mere facelift.
- People do not just want more funding or better logistics — they want structural reforms.

SECTION 8

Roadmap To Reclaim
Grass-roots Democracy:
Citizens Fix-list For
Local-government Elections
& Siecs Overhaul

Frustration

Security
Logistics
Technology
Voter
Education
Transparency
Independence
Funding
ScrapSIEC
LegalReform
CivicMonitoring
Appointm
Reform

As Lagos State prepares for its local government elections on July 12, feedback from Nigerians across the country has exposed a deeper concern: the collapse of trust in the credibility of local government elections — and by extension, the very institutions designed to conduct them.

Citizens were asked: *“What is your recommendation for improving SIECs and the credibility of local government elections?”* The responses poured in — 1,878 distinct suggestions from 1,420 respondents — and the message was loud and clear:

“Until we fix local elections, governance will always feel distant, and elections will feel like theatre.”

The table below is a critical breakdown of what Nigerians are demanding — ranked from the most dominant theme to the least.

Rank	Theme (primary)	Number of Recommendations	% of all 1,878 recommendations	Key Demands
1	Other / Unclassified	744	39.6 %	Vague frustration — “do the right thing,” “stop cheating.” The noise itself is data: half the public is so disillusioned they can’t even articulate fixes. <i>Indifference is worse than opposition.</i>
2	Guarantee Full Independence of SIECs	335	17.8 %	End Governors’ control • protected first-line funding • constitutional backing for autonomy.
3	Technology, Transparency, & Real-Time Results	218	11.6 %	Electronic transmission of results, BVAS-style biometrics, live-streamed collation — “ <i>show us the numbers before politicians touch them.</i> ”
4	Voter Education & Public Awareness	185	9.9 %	Grass-roots civic lessons in local languages, radio jingles, town-hall outreach. Voter apathy is engineered; enlightenment must be too.
5	Ø Scrap SIECs — Hand LG Polls to INEC	122	6.5 %	The uncompromising bloc: “ <i>dissolve the façade, let INEC run everything.</i> ” A canary in the mine: when voters want federal takeover, state credibility is running on a lifeline.
6	Increase Funding & Logistics	81	4.3 %	Funds for ballots, vehicles, well-paid ad-hoc staff — a broke umpire can’t run a fair match.
7	Security & Anti-Violence Measures	55	2.9 %	Neutral policing during campaigns and at polling units, swift prosecution of thugs, protection for voters and officials.
8	Improve Appointment Process	52	2.8 %	Merit-based, multi-stakeholder selection; vet nominees in public hearings.
9	Civic Monitoring & Stake-holder Oversight	44	2.3 %	CSO observers, community monitors, open tally centres — citizens watching citizens.
10	Legal & Constitutional Reform	42	2.2 %	Amend the constitution to redefine (or abolish) SIECs; set national LG-election standards.

1. Unclear, Vague, or General Complaints – “We are Tired”

Count: 744

Percentage: 39.6%

The 39% of recommendations read like exhausted sighs. When half the electorate cannot even finish a sentence, the system's legitimacy is on life-support.

Nearly four in ten recommendations were too vague to classify clearly — responses like “*make it better*,” “*stop cheating*,” or “*do the right thing*.” On the surface, they may seem like expression of frustration — but they reveal something deeper: widespread fatigue, disillusionment, and political disengagement.

In politics, indifference is worse than opposition. When citizens cannot even articulate reforms, it may indicate that trust is collapsing — Perhaps they believe nothing will change.

2. Guarantee Full Independence for SIECs — If They Must Stay

Count: 335

Percentage: 17.8%

This was the clearest reform mandate: if SIECs are to remain, they must be genuinely independent.

Key demands:

- End political appointment of SIEC members by state governors.
- Ensure SIECs receive direct, sufficient and transparent funding — not handouts from state ministries.
- Strengthen legal frameworks to enforce institutional autonomy.

“Citizens are tired of caretaker commissions that take orders from the same governors they are supposed to referee;” a comment said.

3. Use Technology to Secure and Transmit Results

Count: 218

Percentage: 11.6%

A growing bloc is demanding digital guard-rails against manipulations.

Recommendations include:

- Electronic result transmission from polling units.
- Use of biometric voter authentication and digital collation.
- Public display of results before they leave polling centres.

Citizens are saying: “We need to see the results before politicians touch the numbers.”

Technology is not the silver bullet — but for many, it's proof of transparency.

4. Voter Education and Civic Awareness

Count: 185

Percentage: 9.9%

Low turnout isn't just apathy — it's alienation. Many respondents emphasized that voter ignorance is manufactured, not accidental.

What citizens want:

- Civic education in native languages.
- Radio jingles, town halls, and street outreach — not just social media.

Clear communication of Local Government roles and voting responsibilities.

5. Scrap SIECs Altogether — Let INEC Take Over

Count: 122

Percentage: 6.5%

A slimmer but uncompromising bloc said: *don't fix it — kill it.*

Key arguments:

- SIECs have become rubber-stamp agencies.
- Local elections are often 100% won by ruling parties — a statistical impossibility.
- INEC should run all elections, or at least lead in a hybrid model with minimal SIEC support.

Once voters start calling for federal takeover, state credibility is running on a life support.

6. Increase Funding and Electoral Logistics

Count: 81

Percentage: 4.3%

You cannot run a credible election with no fuel, no ink, and no staff.

Demands included:

- Timely release of funds to SIECs.
- Sufficient electoral materials and well-paid ad-hoc staff.
- Logistical readiness — transportation, polling kits, and backup plans.

Without funding, even the most independent SIEC is just a mascot.

7. Improve Security and Prevent Electoral Violence

Count: 55

Percentage: 2.9%

Safety is non-negotiable. Citizens called out rampant intimidation, ballot snatching, and election-related thuggery.

Solutions proposed:

- Deploy neutral police presence at polling units.
- Arrest and prosecute political thugs — not just their foot soldiers, but their funders.
- Protect voters, observers, and officials alike.

8. Reform the Appointment Process

Count: 52

Percentage: 2.8%

Even if SIECs remain, they must be staffed with professionals, not party loyalists.

Fixes include:

- Multi-stakeholder appointment panels.
- Ethical training and vetting of electoral officials.
- Public hearings for SIEC nominees.

9. Civic Monitoring and Stakeholder Involvement

Count: 4

Percentage: 2.3%

This group believes in people power. They demanded:

- Deployment of CSO observers, journalists, and community monitors.
- Real-time reporting and independent verification of results.
- Open collation centres and public counting.

This is about restoring citizens oversight.

10. Legal and Constitutional Reform

Count: 42

Percentage: 2.2%

A tiny but focused group pointed out that none of these matter without constitutional and electoral laws change.

They demanded:

- Amend the Constitution to redefine or abolish SIEC powers.
- Set national standards for LG elections.
- Include SIECs in electoral reform conversations, not just INEC.

Bottom line: Nigerians know exactly what is broken — and how to fix it.

Whether Nigeria reforms SIECs or abolishes them, the demand is the same: restore dignity to local government elections. Make them real. Make them count.

Any remedy must severe partisan control, embrace radical transparency, fund logistics, guarantee security, and speak to voters in the language of bread-and-butter credibility. Anything less is electoral theatre — and the audience is already walking out.

Lagos may be voting on July 12, but the message is national — and urgent.

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