



**Gambia Participates Statement on the observation
of December 4, 2021 Presential Election
Delivered at the Metzzy Residence Hotel,
Kololi, The Gambia**

On Saturday, December 4, the citizens of The Gambia will go to the polls to elect their President that will lead the country for the next five years. In what promises to be a keenly contested election with five political parties and one independent candidate contesting in the election. This will be the first Presidential Election to be conducted since the 2016 elections that ended the two decade long authoritarian regime. The elections will test the resolve of state institutions and the electoral commission to conduct countrywide elections that meet international standards. 962,157 registered voters will participate in the election 57% of these are female and 43% are male.

As the Gambia's largest non-partisan and independent movement of citizen observers, Gambia Participates will be providing systematic, accurate and timely information on the election day process. Gambia Participates' observation of the 2021 presidential election serves to make the process more inclusive, transparent and accountable by enhancing participation, providing independent information on the quality of the process, and deterring potential problems.

Gambia Participates Pre-Election Observation

Gambia Participates is employing a comprehensive observation of the 2021 electoral processes in the Gambia to deepen electoral integrity. Elections are about more than just Election Day, and as such Gambia Participates has been observing the pre-election environment and has been tracking election preparatory activities by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), the election environment in which the election will occur including observing political party campaigns, the abuse/non-abuse of state resources, and critical incidents. Gambia Participates launched the pre-election observation component on October 30th, 2021 by deploying long term observers across the 53 constituencies in The Gambia. Gambia Participates have so far released one report on the observation of the 2021 pre-election environment, in this case, the nomination of presidential candidates.

Gambia Participates Election Day Observation Methodology

For the December 4th Presidential election, Gambia Participates election day observation efforts will involve deploying 615 citizen observers on a proportional basis across all the regions and constituencies in the Gambia to observe the process of voting, counting and results announcements at the polling stations. Gambia Participates will employ a systematic approach to data collection and analysis through the use of a standardized checklist to gather information on the quality of the process from across all the regions and constituencies in The Gambia where the presidential election will take place. Gambia Participates deployment of observers will be proportional to the number of polling stations per region with more observers deploying to regions with more polling stations and fewer observers to areas with fewer polling stations, this will allow Gambia Participates to provide timely and precise information on the process of voting, counting and announcement of results at the polling stations.

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Thus, Gambia Participates will deploy 550 stationary observers and 65 roving observers on a proportional basis to the 1554 polling stations where the election will take place. The 550 trained citizen observers who are duly accredited by the IEC will arrive at their assigned polling station at 7:00am and remain at the polling stations until the end of voting and announcement of official polling unit level results. Using a standardized checklist, they will observe the processes of setting up polling stations, opening, voting and counting procedures, and announcement of ballot tokens. Observers will send in their reports at designated times via coded text messages to the Gambia Participates Data Center stationed within the Greater Banjul. In addition to deploying stationary observers, Gambia Participate will deploy 65 roving observers located in all of the 53 constituencies and the 7 regions, while they observe the electoral environment between polling stations they will observe and report any critical incident to the Gambia Participates data center.

On Election Day, Gambia Participates Data Center will open at 6:00 am and will remain open until the counting has finished at all polling stations and that, all GP observers have sent their observation reports. Gambia Participates data centre is open to accredited observers and media at all times.

Gambia Participate will provide updates on the observation of the process when data is received, analyzed and verified. This will be released and posted on our social media platform - gambia participates/Facebook @gmbparticipates on Twitter. As part of our comprehensive assessment of the elections, Gambia Participates will consider a range of issues such as shortcomings in the pre-election period, the quality of election day processes, and the scale and scope of critical incidents.

GP is fully prepared to observe the presidential election. We are currently conducting a live simulation exercise to test the functionality of our data management systems and our observers to observe the election. Currently, all 550 stationary observers are sending in practice reports based on the Election Day scenario, which will be duly processed by the data clerks and analysis team. Gambia Participate is ready to observe the elections on behalf of the people of The Gambia, to ensure the people's votes are accurately counted.

We call on all citizens, the parties and candidates, IEC and the security agencies to play their parts to ensure a peaceful, credible and conclusive process.

Marr Nyang



Executive Director and
Head of GP 2021 Election Observation Mission