**FACTSHEET ON PERMANENT VOTER CARDS (PVCs) AND CARD READERS**

**Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs)**

* The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has produced Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs) for the 68,833,476 persons in the biometric Register of Voters ahead of the March 28th and April 11th, 2015 general elections. The PVC replaces the Temporary Voter Card (TVC) issued on the heels of registration of voters since 2011.
* Quality, security, durability and cost effectiveness are underlying factors in the production of the Permanent Voter Cards by INEC. These cards have many components and specialized features (e.g. base substrate, security printing, personalization, lamination and chip embedding), and it is designed with an average life span of ten (10) years.
* The PVC has an embedded chip that contains all the biometrics of a legitimate holder (including fingerprints and facial image). On Election Day, it will be swiped with a Smart Card Reader at the polling unit to ensure 100 per cent authentication and verification of the voter before he/she is allowed to vote. The PVC has security features that are not easily susceptible to counterfeiting.
* Only voters who have their PVC will be allowed to vote in the 2015 general elections. For avoidance of doubt, TVCs will not be allowed; thus it is important for registered persons to collect their PVC before the day of the election.
* Interested persons could do a prior check on their status in the Register of Voters by composing an SMS in the following format <*INEC, state of registration, last name, last five digits of the Voter Identification Number* *(i.e., on the TVC*)> and sending the SMS to short code 20120.
* PVCs are available for collection at distribution points in all the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) daily, including on weekends, until Sunday, 8th March 2015.

**Card Readers**

* For the first time in Nigeria’s electoral history, electronic voter authentication system (Smart Card Readers) is being deployed for the 2015 general elections.
* The card reader uses a highly secure and cryptographic technology that is used commonly in devices that need to perform [secure transactions](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Secure_transaction&action=edit&redlink=1), such as paying terminals. It has ultra-low power consumption, with a single core frequency of 1.2GHz and an Android 4.2.2 operating system.
* The card reader units have been broadly subjected to Quality Assurance, Integrity and Functionality testing and found reliable in ease of use, battery life and speed of processing. For instance, it takes an average of 10 seconds to authenticate a voter. The card readers will also be subjected to Stress testing in the states and FCT ahead of the March 28 and April 11, 2015 elections.
* INEC will make a card reader available at every voting point in the 36 states and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) during the 2015 elections, with a substantial number of spares available to address contingencies.

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