



GLOBAL ELECTION  
OBSERVATION  
MISSIONS



RWANDA  
OBSERVATION  
REPORT



15TH JULY 2024

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## FOREWORD

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

As we conclude our observation of the recent elections in Rwanda, I am filled with a deep sense of pride and hope. Our mission's commitment to ensuring free, fair, and transparent elections was met with an incredible display of democratic participation and civic responsibility by the people of Rwanda.

Election observation is driven by more than a commitment to procedural integrity—it is fueled by our unwavering belief in democracy as a powerful force for positive change. To us, elections symbolize the very essence of a nation's hopes and dreams. They are moments of profound significance, where every vote represents a voice, a belief, and a future. Our role is to ensure that this sacred process is carried out with the highest levels of fairness, transparency, and respect for every citizen's right to participate in shaping their country's destiny.

The successful completion of this election is not just a victory for Rwanda, but a testament to the strength and unity of the African spirit. It is a reminder that, together, we can achieve great strides in upholding the principles of democracy, justice, and peace across our beloved continent.

Our advocacy for peace across Africa is deeply intertwined with our mission in election observation. Peace is the heartbeat of democracy, the silent force that underpins stability and prosperity. We believe that peaceful elections are essential not only for the well-being of individual nations but for the collective harmony of the continent.

Pan-Africanism is at the core of our work. It is the belief that we are stronger together, bound by our shared history and common destiny. The resilience and dedication exhibited by the Rwandan people reinforce the vision of a united and prosperous Africa. They have shown us that through unity and determination, we can overcome challenges and build a future where every voice is heard and every vote counts.

I extend my deepest gratitude to our dedicated team members, local partners, and all stakeholders who worked tirelessly to support this mission. Your efforts have not only strengthened the democratic process in Rwanda but have also contributed to the broader goal of fostering peace and stability across Africa.

Let us carry forward the spirit of Pan-Africanism in all our endeavors, working hand in hand to promote democratic values and empower our people. Together, we can continue to build a brighter future for generations to come.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment and support.

With best regards,

Mboni Abel Lubega

Chief Executive Officer



Global Election Observation Missions

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Global Election Observation Mission (GEOM) provided a comprehensive assessment of Rwanda presidential and parliamentary elections held on July 15 2024. These elections were notable as Rwanda first synchronized elections, aimed at enhancing democratic participation by simultaneously electing both the President and Parliamentarians.

### PRE - ELECTION PHASE

**Preparations:** The Rwandan National Electoral Commission (NEC), led by Chairperson Rt.Hon. Oda Gasinzigwa, implemented meticulous planning and rigorous measures to ensure inclusivity and transparency. Extensive voter education and registration drives were conducted, and logistical arrangements were streamlined to facilitate smooth operations across all polling stations.

### OBSERVER DEPLOYMENT

GEOM, along with other international observers, interacted with key electoral stakeholders to understand the preparations and provided feedback.

Observers from various regions, including the African Union (AU), COMESA, and the East African Community (EAC), etc were deployed across the country to monitor the electoral process and ensure adherence to democratic stand.

### ELECTION DAY

**Polling Stations:** Observers reported that polling stations opened on time, and voting procedures were conducted efficiently. The presence of trained electoral personnel ensured orderly conduct, and the voting process was largely peaceful and transparent.

**Voter Turnout:** High voter turnout was observed, reflecting the electorate enthusiasm and commitment to participating in the democratic process. Special arrangements were made for diaspora voting and for special category representatives on different days.

### POST-ELECTION PHASE

**Counting and Results:** The counting process was conducted transparently, with results being promptly posted at polling stations. Observers noted that the NEC ensured timely communication of preliminary results, which contributed to the credibility of the process.

**Preliminary Findings:** Initial observations indicated that the elections were conducted in a free, fair, and credible manner, adhering to both national legal frameworks and international standards. The synchronized election approach was **praised** for its efficiency and effectiveness in consolidating Rwanda's democratic processes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

GEOM provided several recommendations to further strengthen Rwanda.

- **Continuous Voter Education:** Enhancing voter education programs to maintain high levels of electoral participation and awareness.
- **Logistical Improvements:** Further refining logistical arrangements to ensure even smoother operations in future elections.
- **International Collaboration:** Encouraging continued collaboration with international observers to uphold transparency and accountability in the electoral process.

These efforts by Rwanda in organizing the synchronized elections and the contributions from international observers underscore the country's commitment to democratic governance and set a positive precedent for future elections in the region.

## **APPRECIATION FOR EXCEPTIONAL COLLABORATIONS DURING THE RECENT ELECTIONS.**

Dear members of the National Electoral Commission of Rwanda,

On behalf of Global Election Observation Missions - GEOM, we extend our deepest gratitude and appreciations to the National electoral commission of Rwanda for your exceptional cooperation and support extended to us as international observers in the recent electoral processes.

Your diligent efforts and commitments to ensuring a transparent, inclusive and well managed election have been instrumental in the successful conduct of the electoral process. We wish to highlight and commend several key aspects of your work.

- **Organisation excellence;**

The meticulous planning and efficient execution of the electoral operations were evident throughout the process. The well - organized polling stations and the smooth flow of the voting process were testament to the NEC's high level; of preparations and professionalism.

- **Transparency and accessibility:** The open channels of communication with observers and transparent handling of election **procedures** were greatly appreciated. Your commitment to providing timely information and facilitating our monitoring activities ensured that the election process was conducted with the highest level of integrity and also providing polling stations in hospitals was great idea for both patients and staff.

- **Voter engagement and inclusivity;**

The effective voter education initiatives and the comprehensive measures to ensure broad voter participation were commendable. The accessibility to polling stations and the facilitation of voters, needs underscored your dedication to an inclusive electoral process.

- **Integrity and accountability;**

The integrity in which the election results were compiled and announced reflects the robustness of the systems you have implemented .Your vigilance in addressing any challenges and maintaining accountability throughout the process was reassuring and greatly contributed to the credibility of the election.

- **Support and collaboration;**

The support extended to our observation mission, including logistical assistance and coordination was invaluable. The collaborative spirit demonstrated by NEC facilitated our work and enhanced the effectiveness of our mission.

The success of this election stands as a testament to the hard work and dedication of the NEC and staff. Your contributions have not only ensured a smooth and credible electoral process but have also set a benchmark for other nations to copy a leaf especially the African nations.

As we conclude our missions, we would like to acknowledge the exemplary role that the National Electoral Commission of Rwanda has played in upholding democratic values. Your efforts serve as an inspiring example of effective electoral management and reinforce the principles of transparency and fairness.

We look forward to continuing our engagement with your esteemed commission in future endeavors. Please extend our sincere thanks to all those involved in this successful process. Once again we thank you for your remarkable dedication and for facilitating a process that reflects the highest standards of democratic practice. Long live the National Electoral Commission - NEC of Rwanda Long live the people of Rwanda.

Baker Walusimbi  
Head Observation Missions



Global Election Observation Missions

## APPRECIATION MESSAGE

As observers of Global Election Observation Missions - GEOM , we thank our fellow local and international observers who participated in the Rwanda National Presidential and Parliamentary elections because our participating in any election signifies democratic transparency and promotion of human rights.

We thank the security of Rwanda which enabled the election exercise to run smoothly without intimidation or blocking of candidates to and from their rallies or to the media stations.

We thank the media channels both local and international which covered the whole exercise of elections in Rwanda to the day of elections, counting of the votes to the announcing of the elected leaders.

We hail the two presidential candidates, Mr. Mpayimana Philippe and Dr. Habineza Frank who accepted and congratulated the winner Mr. Kagame Paul to take on the steering as the elected president of the republic of Rwanda.

We above all thank the incumbent president Paul Kagame for creating a favorable, friendly and possible environment for all the contestants in their respective positions to campaign to the last day without any coercion or threats. This is a sign of political maturity with democratic values displayed.

Last but not least we thank the people of Rwanda who displayed the love for their candidates , the maturity they displayed from the rallies to the time of voting, the patience they displayed in the scotching sunshine waiting to cast their votes It was like they were celebrating on that day. So the unity and love for each other was great.

Once again long live the Electoral Commission of Rwanda - NEC for organizing this election, Long live the candidates who participated in the electoral positions, long live the elected president of the republic of Rwanda H.E President Kagame Paul, Long live the people of Rwanda.



## INTRODUCTION

**GLOBAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS-GEOM (*Ambassadors Of Peace*)** is a Non-Partisan , Non-Governmental and Non-Political organization (*Ambassadors of Peace*). It came into operations in 2015 and our major aims and objectives is for Promoting Democracy, Fostering Peace in Africa and the entire world. These are enshrined in the Vision and Mission of our organization.

### **Our Vision**

Aiming to foster global democracy, transparency, and fairness, our Global Election Observation Missions organization is dedicated to observing elections worldwide. We strive to ensure the integrity of electoral processes by promoting inclusivity, accountability, and the protection of fundamental human rights. Through collaborative efforts with diverse stakeholders, we seek to uphold the principles of free and fair elections, ultimately contributing to the advancement of democratic values on a global scale.”

### **Our Mission**

Empowering democracy on a global scale, our mission at the Global Election Observation Missions is to champion the integrity of electoral processes through vigilant observations. Committed to fostering transparency, fairness, and inclusivity, we work collaboratively with nations to ensure free and credible elections. Upholding the principles of accountability and respect for human rights, we strive to be a catalyst for positive change, promoting democratic values and strengthening the foundation of representative governance worldwide.”

We also strictly follow our **Core Values** as an organization of being impartial in our work, transparency in reporting and non interference by trying to influence or instruct the election organizers plus election presiding officers.

This report presents an impartial assessment of the electoral process based on the historical background of Rwanda as a nation and the observations gathered during the pre-election, election day, and post-election phases.

## Methodology

As observers of Global Election Observation Missions, we deployed a team of international observers who were well trained in the election observation principles and methodology. We chose to observe in Kigali city within its three districts of Gasabo, Nyarugenge and Kicukiro covering 176 polling stations. We used the Long-term observations method of the pre-election, election day and the post-election period where we managed to cover the final day campaigns of the three candidates of HE. Paul Kagame of FPR , Mr. Frank Habineza of Green party plus Mr.Mpayimana Philippe - Independent.

This report aims to provide a detailed assessment of the electoral environment based on observations conducted across various polling stations in Kigali City of Rwanda. The observations focused on key aspects such as organization, voter turnout, security measures, accessibility, compliance with electoral procedures, and public awareness campaigns or civic education . The findings presented here are derived from first hand observations made during the pre-current period, leading up to election day.

A structured approach was adopted to ensure comprehensive coverage of different polling stations and demographics within Kigali City. Polling stations were selected in the three districts to capture a diverse representation of the electorates.

The methodology involved discreet observation from a designated area within each polling station, adhering to local regulations and protocols regarding electoral observation. Data collection was systematic, focusing on specific criteria outlined to assess the electoral process effectively. Observations were supplemented by interviews with electoral officials, voters, and local observers to gain deeper insights into the electoral dynamics and challenges.

## Legal Frame Work

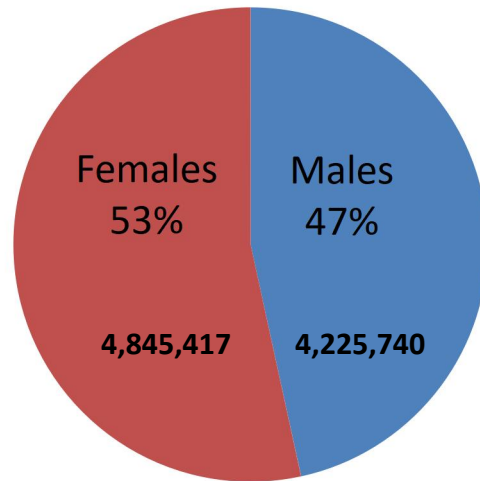
As Observers we had to strictly adhere to the legal framework coined within the constitution of Rwanda **Organic Law No.001/2019.OL of 29/09/2019** and also to follow the international observers codes of conduct , Legal Framework and Oversight, operating within the national laws and regulations governing elections in Rwanda by avoiding conflicts with the oversight mechanisms which were put in place to monitor compliance and address any irregularities that may have arisen as per the rules and regulations of Rwanda Electoral Commission governing both local and international observers.

## Pre - Election Period

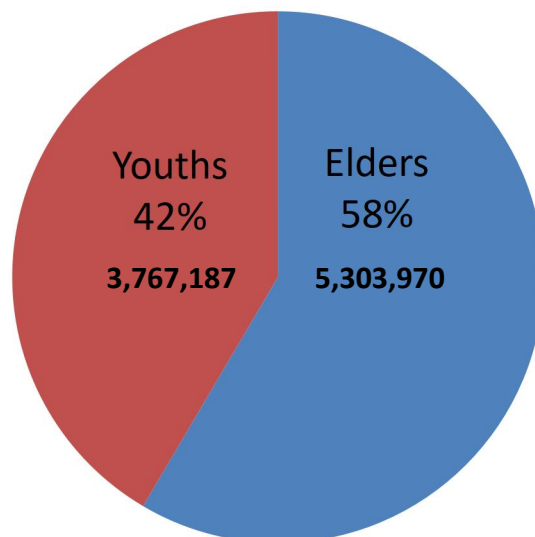
Always the Pre- election period is punctuated with the civic education of the voters, voters registration, candidates registration then the campaign period. As observers of Global Election Observations Missions, we observed that the National Electoral Commission of Rwanda did its work of civic education and as a result ,the big turn up of the voters on the election day. It was an indicator that people were aware of what they were going to do on that day of electing their leaders right from the president ,the members of parliament plus the special interest groups of women and the youths.

Charts showing the percentages of Males against Females and Youths against Elders.

## Registered Voters - 9,071,157



## Total number of registered Youths VS Elders



About the total number of registered voters, Rwanda NEC registered 9,071,157 voters of which 4,225,740 (47%) were males, 4,845,417 (53%) were females. The Youth accounted for 42 % (3,767,187) of the total number of registered voters.

## THE THREE ACCREDITED PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES



**HE. PAUL KAGAME**

**FPR (NCUMBENT)**



**DR. HABINEZA FRANK**

**GREEN PARTY**



**MR. PHILIPPE MPAYIMANA**

**INDEPENDENT**

The Rwanda National Electoral Commission (NEC) completed the candidate screening process, successfully accrediting three candidates to run for the presidency of the Republic of Rwanda. The accredited candidates are Mr. Paul Kagame of the FRP, Dr. Frank Habineza of the Green Party, and Mr. Philippe Mpayimana, an Independent.

### CANDIDATE PROFILES



**HE. PAUL KAGAME**

**FPR (NCUMBENT)**

Kagame is the current Head of State of Rwanda. Among notable deeds, he led the liberation struggle as the commander of the then Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) – army wing of RPF Inkotanyi – which is credited for defeating Juvenal Habyarimana’s regime and stopping the Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994, and contributing to unity and peace restoration in a country that was devastated by the Genocide.



DR.HABINEZA FRANK

GREEN PARTY

According to his profile on Parliament website, Habineza has an honorary Doctorate of Humanities (Democracy and Human Rights).

He was a Member of Parliament's Chamber of Deputies since 2018 **until June 14 when President Kagame dissolved the Lower House** for the 2024 election purposes.

Habineza is **attempting to be the Head of State** again, after his first bid failed in the 2017 presidential polls where he got 0.45 per cent of the total votes.



MR. PHILIPPE  
MPAYIMANA

Mpayimana is currently a Senior Expert in charge of Community Engagement at the Ministry of National Unity and Civic Engagement (MINUBUMWE), a position he has held since November 2021.

It is his second time to contest for the Head of State position after an unsuccessful attempt in 2017 when he got 0.72 per cent of the total votes in elections that the **incumbent, Kagame, won by a landslide.**

Before joining MINUBUMWE, Mpayimana worked in various media houses as a journalist since 1990.

## Parliamentary candidates

A total number of 588 candidates were approved for the 2024 parliamentary elections and these are categorized as follows:-

- ✓ 345 (154 women and 191 men) candidates from political organizations and 1 independent candidate contesting for 53 seats.
- ✓ 199 female candidates contesting for 24 seats
- ✓ 31 (9 women and 22 men) candidates representing the youth contesting for 2 seats.
- ✓ 13 (3 women and 10 men) candidates representing people with disabilities contesting for one seat.

## Briefing

We were invited by the National Electoral Commission Rwanda, to attend the briefing for all the Observers both local and international organisations and to receive an update on the status of the preparations by the Chairperson of NEC Rt.Hon. Oda Gasinzigwa at Gasabo Conference Hall.



**Observers and Head of Missions attending the briefing**



**GEOM in a group photo with the Chairperson of Rwanda National Electoral Commission Rt.Hon. Oda Gasinzigwa after the briefing of all observers at Gasabo Conference Hall**



**GEOM in a group photo with Syaka Michael Nyarwya Commissioner of Political Integration International Relations PAM Rwanda**

By the time observers left the Hall we had been equipped with all the necessary information about the elections in the republic of Rwanda to help us execute our work on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024. As observers we were briefed on what to do and what to refrain from when in the field observing elections. Emphasis was put on the respect for the Rwanda historical back ground and therefore that as we observe and write our reports we were cautioned not to interfere with the stability, democracy and peace that is prevailing in Rwanda. Here an **Organic Law No.001/2019.OL of 29/09/2019 governing elections in Rwanda** was quoted and a copy given to all observers. We were taken through the entire process right from registration of the voters, displaying of the voters registers, registration and screening of the candidates for presidential and parliamentary positions, schedules of the campaigns of all candidates and gazetting of the polling stations then the days of elections of presidential, parliamentary, youths and women.

As observers of Global Election Observation Missions, this was a great job done by the National Electoral Commission of Rwanda under the leadership of the Rt.Hon. Oda Gasinzigwa with her entire NEC team.

## REGISTERED VOTERS PER PROVINCE.

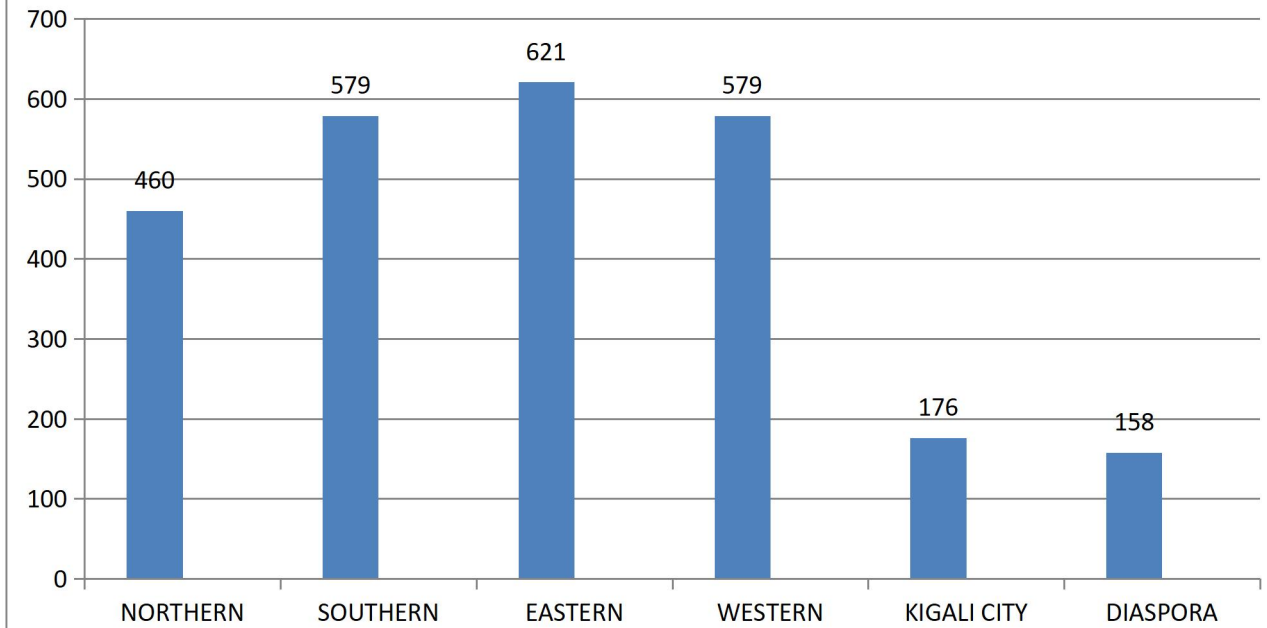
| Province       | Registered       | Male             |           | Females          |           | Youth            |           |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
|                |                  | Number           | %         | Number           | %         | Number           | %         |
| Kigali City    | 1,172,229        | 609,986          | 52        | 526,243          | 48        | 470,043          | 40        |
| Southern Prov. | 2,055,930        | 928,649          | 45        | 1,127,281        | 55        | 876,987          | 43        |
| Eastern Prov.  | 2,246,371        | 1,043,812        | 46        | 1,202,559        | 54        | 833,633          | 37        |
| Northern Prov. | 1,480,558        | 678,690          | 46        | 801,868          | 54        | 654,240          | 44        |
| Western Prov.  | 2,038,931        | 923,360          | 45        | 1,115,571        | 55        | 915,369          | 45        |
| Diaspora       | 771,38           | 41,243           | 53        | 35,895           | 47        | 16,915           | 22        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>9,071,157</b> | <b>4,225,740</b> | <b>47</b> | <b>4,845,417</b> | <b>53</b> | <b>3,767,187</b> | <b>42</b> |

## POLLING STATIONS

| NO | PROVINCE     | POLLING STATIONS |
|----|--------------|------------------|
| 1  | NORTHERN     | 460              |
| 2  | SOUTHERN     | 579              |
| 3  | EASTERN      | 621              |
| 4  | WESTERN      | 597              |
| 5  | KIGALI CITY  | 176              |
| 6  | DIASPORA     | 158              |
|    | <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>2,591</b>     |



## POLLING STATIONS PER PROVINCE



PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES CAMPAIGNING

Incumbent President and candidate for RPF Paul Kagame Campaign Trail



Presidential candidate Dr.Frank Habineza Campaign Trail



Presidential Candidate Mr. Mpayimana Philippe Campaign Trail



### **The polling day and the polling stations setup;**

As early as 5:30am on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024 all the observers of Global Election Observation Missions were awake and preparing ourselves for the voting as was scheduled to start at exactly 700am on all polling stations gazetted by National Electoral Commission of Rwanda - NEC.

We were at the polling stations by 7:am to observe the set up of the polling stations. The set up of polling stations plus the booths was to the point in that similar set up was in all the stations we managed to observe in Kigali plus the entire country. They were decorated with national colors and had music playing .These two were to enable voters easily identify the stations where ever they were located.



**The external view of the setup of the stations bearing the National Colors' of blue, Yellow plus green signifying the importance of the day.**

Inside the stations as were setup, the volunteers or presiding officers sealing the ballot box.



## Voting Day

At exactly 7:00am voting started in most of the polling stations. We observed something unique at one of the stations where before starting one electoral officer made all the volunteers or presiding officers take an oath in front of the voters and a prayer was also said before starting. All stations were accessible by the disabled and the elderly.





**Presidential candidate  
HE. Paul Kagame  
Casting his vote.**



**Presidential candidate  
Dr. Habineza Frank  
Casting his vote.**



**Presidential candidate  
Mr. Mpayimana Philippe  
Casting his vote.**

## Voters

Turn up of the voters at different polling stations



Voters lining up and daring the sun as they wait to cast their votes



The turn up of voters was in big numbers at most of the polling stations we observed in Kigali city.





**Voters casting their vote to decide who will be their leaders**



**Global Election Observation Missions with Dr.Kaitesi Usta CEO of Rwanda Governance Board**

HOW WE DO OUR WORK WITH EYES ON AS GLOBAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS (GEOM)



One of our Global Election Observation Missions doing the observation of voters in lines ready to elect **their** leaders.

## Vote counting.



Vote counting started at all stations at the same 3:00pm because there was no weather disruptions

A presiding officer or polling station volunteer displaying a presidential ballot paper to the candidate agents and people around during the vote counting at one of the polling station.




Each polling station had one of the polling station volunteer capturing the announced candidate on a tallying sheet as shown above.

Vote counting started as soon as the elections closed by 3:00pm in all stations as was decided by the Rwanda National Electoral Commission. It was only those found in lines who were allowed to vote and as soon as all those found in lines voted then the counting also started. All that was required to capture the results were set and ready for the counting of the ballots.

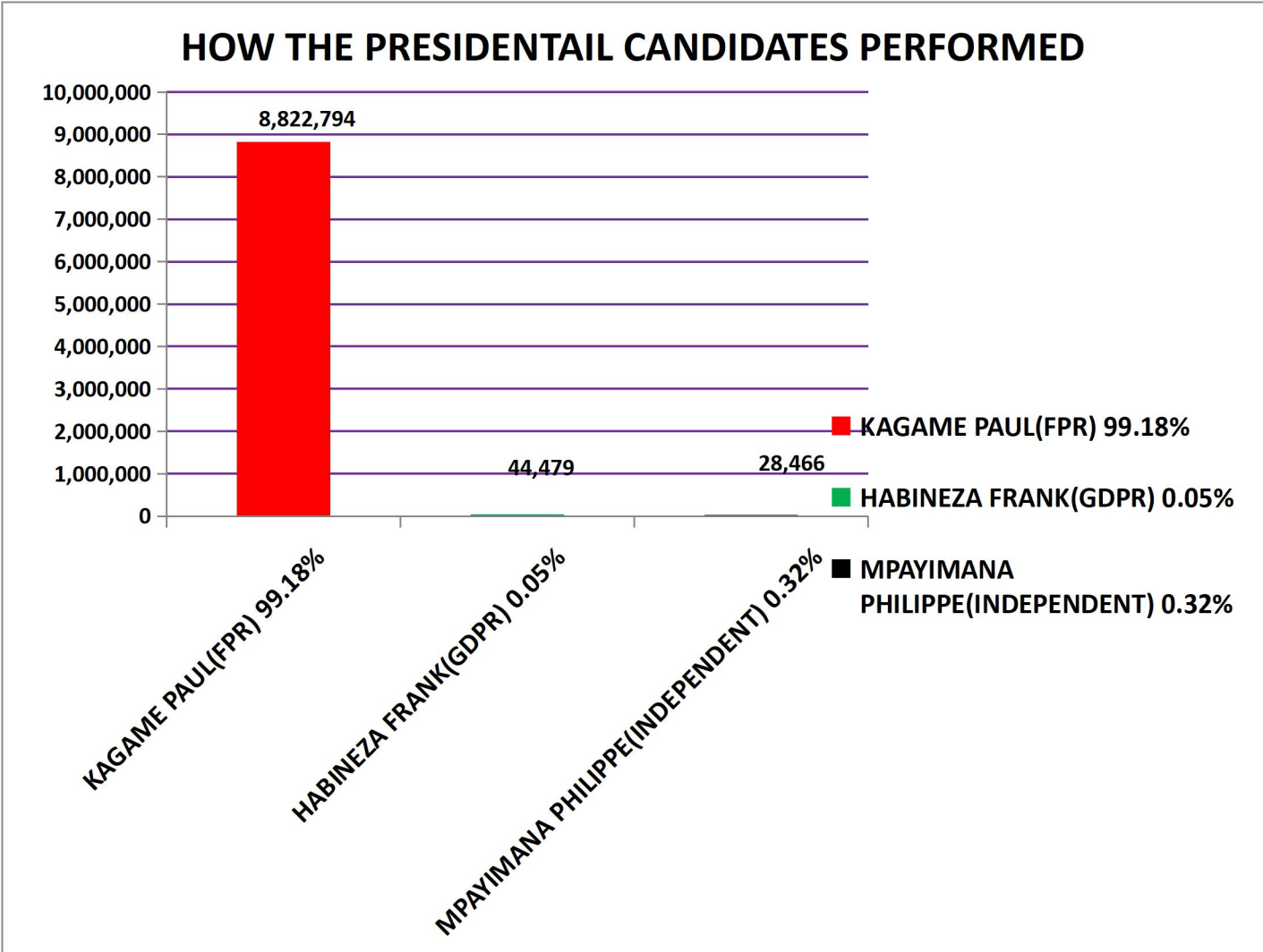


**URUPAPURO RW'ITORA RUTORERWAHO  
PEREZIDA WA REPUBULIKA - 2024**

| AMAZINA<br>Y'UMUKANDIDA | IKIMENYETSO<br>CY'UMUTWE WA POLITIKI/<br>ISHYIRAHAMWE RY'IMITWE<br>YA POLITIKI/UMUKANDIDA<br>WIGENGA | IFOTO<br>Y'UMUKANDIDA   | AHO UTORA ATERA<br>IGIKUMWE CYANGWA<br>AVIVURA |
|-------------------------|--|---|--|
| KAGAME<br>PAUL          |                     |    |  |
| HABINEZA<br>FRANK       |                   |  |  |
| MPAYIMANA<br>PHILIPPE   |                   |  |  |

**SPECIMEN**

# How the presidential candidates fared



## HOW THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT PERFORMED

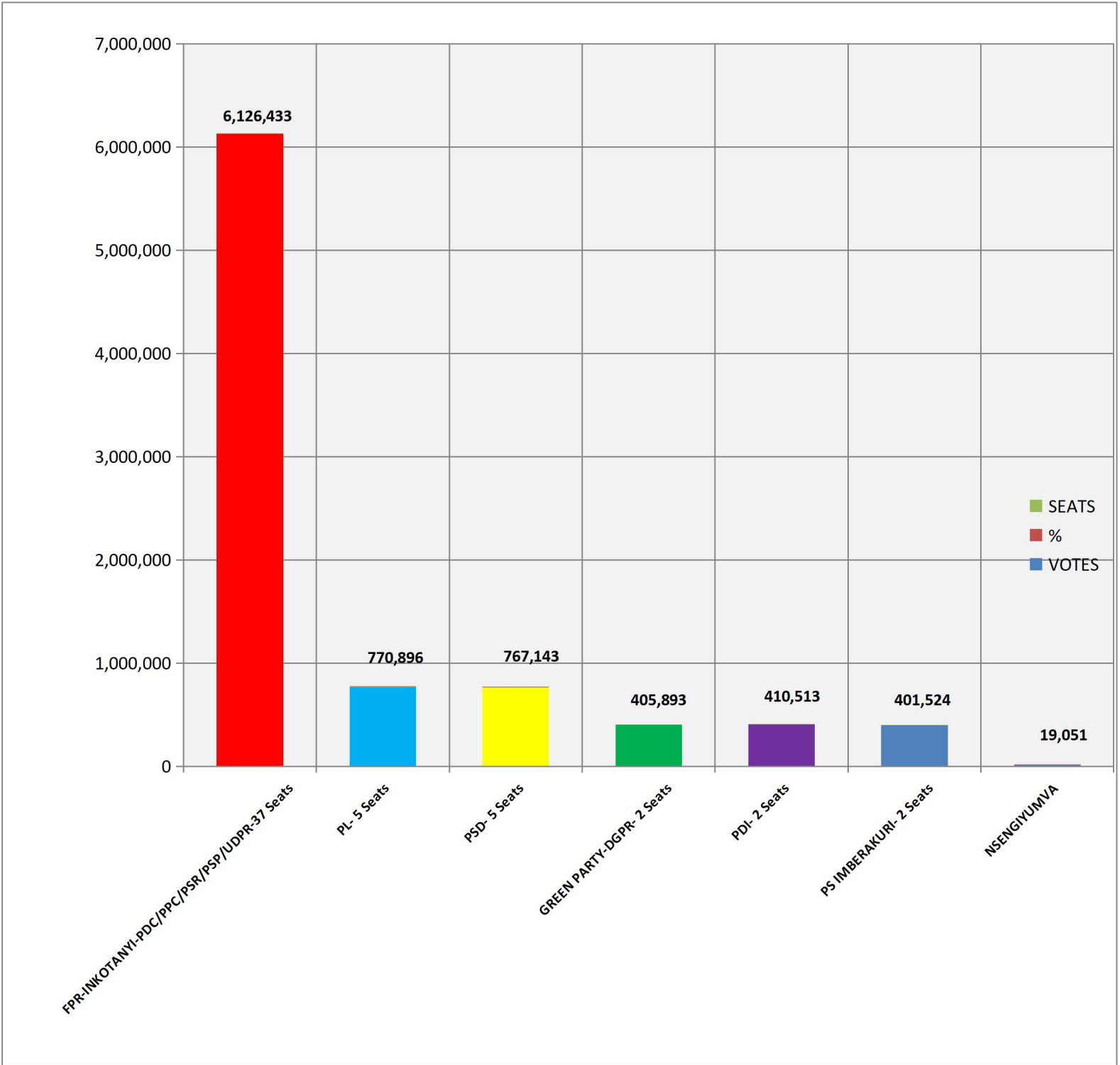


Chart showing how the MP's performed

## HOW THE CANDIDATES PERFORMED PER REGION

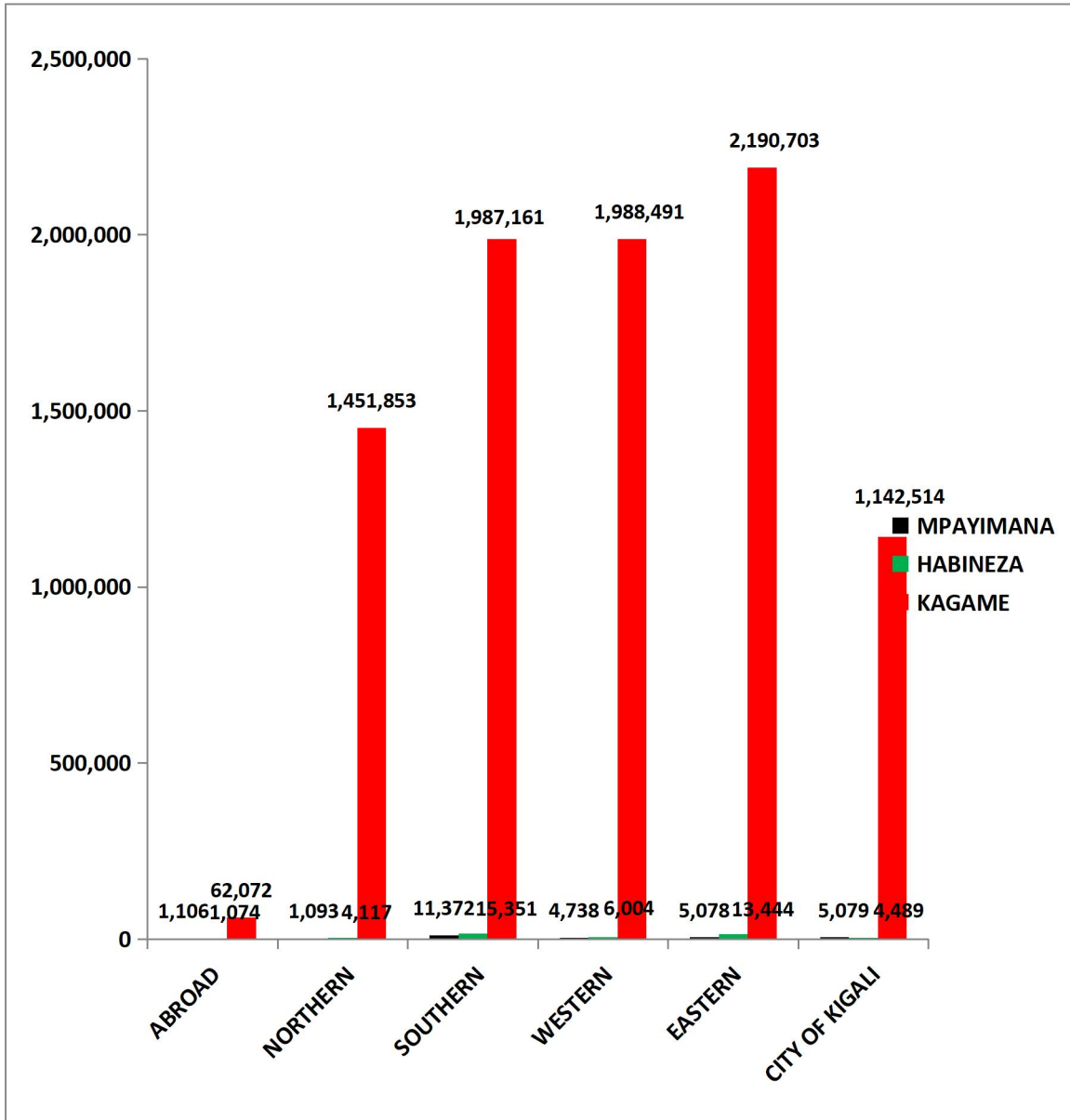


Chart showing how the presidential candidates performed per region

Registered voters were: **9,071,157**. Total votes cast-were: **8,907,876**. Valid votes cast were: **8,901,453** representing **99.93%**. This is an indicator that NEC did a very good work of civic education and also that the Rwandans feel that pride of choosing their leaders with only less than 0.07%. This is possibly from those who are currently abroad.

## Commendations

- We as observers of Global Election Observation Missions, observed that a commendable work was done by National Electoral Commission of Rwanda NEC of ensuring that elections in Rwanda was organized smoothly and all stake holders were handled with utmost respect and given equal opportunities to canvas for their support from the registered voters. Equal number of days were given to all the candidates for campaigning with no special treatment to one or some candidate/s. Because they all stopped campaigning on the same day of 13<sup>th</sup> July 2024 even the incumbent president Paul Kagame inclusive. So there was no discrimination of candidates.
- All the candidates were given security to ensure that no one is either hurt, intimidated or disorganized in their campaigns. So this is commendable and a job well done by the security forces of Rwanda as a government and by the National Electoral Commission of Rwanda.
- All the voters materials were delivered in time to their respective destinations, and polling stations were setup in time to avoid late preparations.
- The disabled, the elderly plus those who could not easily locate their polling stations were all helped by the station volunteers.
- The designing of the stations, the playing of the music at all the stations was highly commendable because it helped the voters to easily locate the stations and also it signified the importance of the day of the voters deciding their leaders.
- The volunteers were fast in handling the voters because the time taken to serve a voter was very short. So NEC Rwanda did a very good job of training the volunteers.
- As soon as the elections stopped per polling station, vote counting started and results announced to the candidate's agents and voters present. All the counting of the votes was done in a transparency way where each station had a tallying chart for every candidate.
- The National Electoral Commission did a very good job of online accreditation of observers. This made the accreditation of observers easy and fast whereby we just had to go pick the accreditation cards ready. So we appreciate the work done by the Documentation and archives department.



## Recommendations

- There is need to have English speaking volunteers or presiding officers at all the polling stations to help the international observers understand what is taking place. This is so because most of the volunteers were speaking either Kinyarwanda or French and so there was that language barrier, hence the need for the interpreters to the only English speaking international observers.
- There is need to increase on the polling stations in the next elections because of the increase in population as more future voters will be joining the eligible voters data base. This can help reduce on the congestion and long lines with voters standing in either the scorching sunshine or rain.
- We highly recommend that the campaign time be increased to enable candidates traverse all areas of the country.

### Preliminary Report Presentation to the media.

**Mr. Simon Pierre head of delegation from Cameroon giving his preliminary report of the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024 Rwanda Presidential /Parliamentary elections.**



**Global Election Observation Missions head of observation missions with other observers from Cameroon, Senegal and Benin, in a press release of the preliminary report of the Rwanda presidential /parliamentary elections**

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Rwanda's election provides a positive example of how effective electoral processes and political stability can contribute to a successful democratic environment. By embracing and adapting these practices, other African states can work towards improving their own electoral systems and fostering a more robust and inclusive democratic culture across the continent