



e-CARD

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is a *Sample Based Observation (SBO)*?

The SBO is an election observation activity using statistic principles to collect information concerning the entire process of Election Day implementation. The SBO is similar with other election observation activities, such as the *Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT)* or in Indonesia, more commonly known as the *Quick Count*.

2. What is the difference between the SBO and *Quick Count*?

Compared to the Quick Count, the SBO focuses more on evaluating the qualitative aspects of the voting process, rather than the voting results or the quantitative aspects only. The Quick Count, which is conducted without observation of the entire voting process, cannot detect fraud or problems, which may occur during voting that can impact the voting result in the polling stations. Because the SBO focuses on observing the quality of the process on voting and counting day, the SBO is able to detect, report, and reveal problems that may occur on Election Day. e-CARD volunteers will observe the overall process of voting and vote counting, not only the process of counting votes. This is why the e-CARD observation results will be able to give a more complete picture of the quality of voting process in polling stations.

3. Will the SBO be conducted by e-CARD independently?

The SBO by e-CARD will be conducted by its independent network that is non-partisan and not funded by any political party or any individual candidate. All e-CARD volunteers are obliged to be neutral and non-partisan. They are not allowed to be involved in any political activities before the election, on Election Day, and after the election. e-CARD volunteers have also signed and pledged to uphold the SBO volunteer ethics code, which states that they are not activists, candidates, political party members, or members of the success team of a political party or candidate.

4. What is the objective of the SBO?

The SBO's objective is to report on the quality of the election, prevent fraud during voting and the vote counting process, independently verify the official result in a short time period, and uncover fraud if it occurs. Because the official vote counting usually takes a long time, it cannot be immediately announced to the public. This long period of time opens the possibility of uncertainty or a political vacuum, which may threaten the region's stability. An accurate and credible SBO is able to independently verify the official results, immediately giving a prediction to decrease political tensions after the voting has been conducted.

5. Can the SBO prevent fraud?

Public announcements about the existence of independent observers several days before the election can make people think twice before they commit fraud. The existence of SBO volunteers in the chosen sample polling stations can prevent those who want to commit fraud at those polling stations. It's true that the SBO cannot prevent fraud that happens outside the TPS or before voting day. But quantitative information from the SBO regarding the results of the counting projection can be a tool for verification if fraud occurs in the vote counting process. This can be done by observing if there any inconsistencies between the results in the polling stations and the official vote results by the election commission. Fraud is often revealed when the official tabulation result differs from the SBO result.

6. How is the SBO implemented?

e-CARD will deploy 600 volunteers, 60 staff to monitor the quality, and 24 regional coordinators to observe 600 polling stations spread throughout 23 *kabupaten/ kota* (districts) in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) Province. e-CARD volunteer will not observe all 10,027 polling stations in NAD. e-CARD volunteers will only observe randomly selected polling stations through a statistical sample. e-CARD observers will send the observation results by SMS and telephone calls to the SBO Call Center in Jakarta.

7. What will be done with this information?

A team at the SBO Call Center will process and analyze the incoming information. Various statistical indicators will be used to show how accurate our samples are.

8. What's next?

After checking, analysing and verifying the incoming numbers (if needed), we will release SBO result to the public at a press conference.

9. How accurate is this SBO?

SBO volunteers are trained on all procedural aspects in the polling stations. They are also supplied with observation sheets as benchmarks to evaluate the entire process in the polling stations. So the SBO result will be based on facts in the field.

On the quantitative aspects, the SBO is not based on opinion, but based on the vote counting results at the polling stations. This makes the SBO projections accurate because it is based on statistics and a strict sample selection. If there is fraud in the polling stations, which can impact the voting result at that polling station, the SBO can accurately evaluate that process. But if the election is conducted well without any fraud, the results of the SBO can be compared to the official results by the KIP.

10. What is the difference between the SBO and other surveys?

The SBO is not a survey. Public Surveys describe public opinions concerning how people are going to vote or information regarding voters' attitude. Learning from the previous local election in Aceh, it is not clear whether people will honestly answer who they are going to vote for. On the other hand, the SBO is based on facts from field observations. For the projected DPRA vote results, SBO observers will take notes on the current voting trends. The SBO does not observe preferences, but measures voters' attitude. Other advantages of the SBO is that SBO observers are not only able to take notes on the voting results, but are also able to observe the over all process from the opening until vote counting at the polling station close. So if fraud occurs in that polling station, the SBO will be able to detect it.

11. Where has the SBO been implemented?

The embryo of the SBO is from the *Parallel Vote Tabulation*. During the Philippines' Presidential Election in 1996, *the National Citizen Movement for Free Elections* (NAMFREL) tried to create an accurate prediction of the official vote counting results from 90,000 existent polling stations. They succeeded in revealing huge vote counting fraud committed by Marcos supporters. Since then, *the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs* (NDI) has been assisting more than 35 organizations to conduct PVTs in Bulgaria, Croatia, Guyana, Mexico, Nicaragua, among others. In the March 2008 Zimbabwe election, it was apparent that in a situation susceptible to fraud and conflict, qualitative aspects should be prioritized over quick count predictions. . That is why the PVT method is being developed into the SBO, which gives more attention to evaluative process in polling stations that can prevent conflict. The SBO has also been conducted during the Cambodian Election in July 2008.

12. How is a representative sample selected?

The polling station is the unit of analysis of the SBO. Drawing a sample cannot be completed before the polling station list is available. In choosing the sample, the SBO pays attention to both geographic and demographic voter distribution (for example, including urban and rural voters). With a random sample, the SBO can evaluate and accurately predict the characteristics of the population. But of course, this sample was designed with a known margin of error.

13. Who is the Community for Aceh Resources Development (e-CARD)?

For the election in Aceh on April 9, 2009, the SBO will be conducted by e-CARD. e-CARD is a non-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO) that began as an association established by several people who were committed to Aceh's development. This academic association, who gathered at the *Forum Rektor Indonesia Simpul Aceh*, agreed to establish an organization that could deliver the voices of civil society to accelerate the development process through informal education and other scholastic efforts. On June 22, 2002, the informal organization called e-CARD was established. This organization was ceremoniously established on May 6, 2005. Besides education and training, e-CARD also works on voter education programs for young women in three *kabupaten/kota* (districts) on the southwest coast, which includes South Aceh *Kabupaten*, Southwest Aceh, and West Aceh. For the SBO, e-CARD received technical assistance from the *National Democratic Institute for International Affairs* (NDI). e-CARD has already been listed as an observer organization and institution that will conduct a quick count.

14. When will we know e-CARD's observation results?

Here is the e-Card press conference schedule:

Date	Activity	Venue
April 9, 2009 Time :19:00*	<i>Press Conference I: Quality of opening and voting process in Aceh</i>	Aceh I room Hermes Hotel Jl. T. nyak makam Banda Aceh
April 10, 2009 Time: 15:00*	<i>Press Conference II: Observation results on vote counting in Aceh</i>	Aceh I room Hermes Hotel
TBD	<i>Press Conference III: Regarding the independent verification regarding the results of the voting counting for the DPRA</i>	TBD

* Times may change. To find out the exact time of the press conference, please contact 0811 893 128

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