

# Ushahidi COMRADES platform monitors the Kenyan Elections

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**Brussels, 27/02/2018** - The crowdsourcing technology company Ushahidi used their platform to monitor Kenya's General Election held throughout the period ranging from August to October 2017. The platform employed features that were designed as part of the [COMRADES project](#) and was also an opportunity for COMRADES to conduct further user testing in a real setting, on how communities respond to potential electoral crisis. The initiative was called "[Uchaguzi](#)" (or "elections" in Kiswahili) and monitored incidences of electoral offences, violence, and peace activities to inform Kenyans on how their counties and constituencies voted during the General Elections.

The Role of Uchaguzi initiative was to ensure that citizens' participation in the Electoral process and access to Electoral Services would be more transparent, peaceful, and fair than in the previous elections. The initiative gave citizens the ability to report on any suspicious or violent activity with the confidence that their voice would be heard and their reports would be taken seriously. The Uchaguzi initiative brought together observers from CRECO ([Constitution & Reform Education Consortium](#)), where more than 700 monitors were located at various polling stations around the country to perform the important task of verifying incoming reports. The initiative also brought the Action Response Teams through [InfoNET](#) that was comprised of the Electoral Management Bodies to respond and take action on all verified reports. The Action Response Teams also worked with a team of Analysts to give a statement of the National Report throughout the elections period. Uchaguzi established two, toll-free, short codes that could be used by the public to send SMS messages countrywide and report any type of electoral offences.

One of the features developed through COMRADES added significant value to the initiative in Kenya by allowing citizens to submit reports via Facebook, with the use of a chatbot. The Facebook chatbot received over 3,000 reports alone. Moreover, the COMRADES team had the opportunity to witness, first hand and in real time, how teams of online volunteers, reporters, responders, and community activists use such a platform. Many of these observations are continuing to inform future platform improvements and developments. In total, Uchaguzi captured almost 20,000 reports all over the country; several of these were escalated to the appropriate authorities for response and transparency.





Figure: The Uchaguzi team triaging incoming reports during the 2017 Kenya General Elections (Photo by Shadrock Roberts)

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**Further information:** COMRADES website: [www.comrades-project.eu](http://www.comrades-project.eu)

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