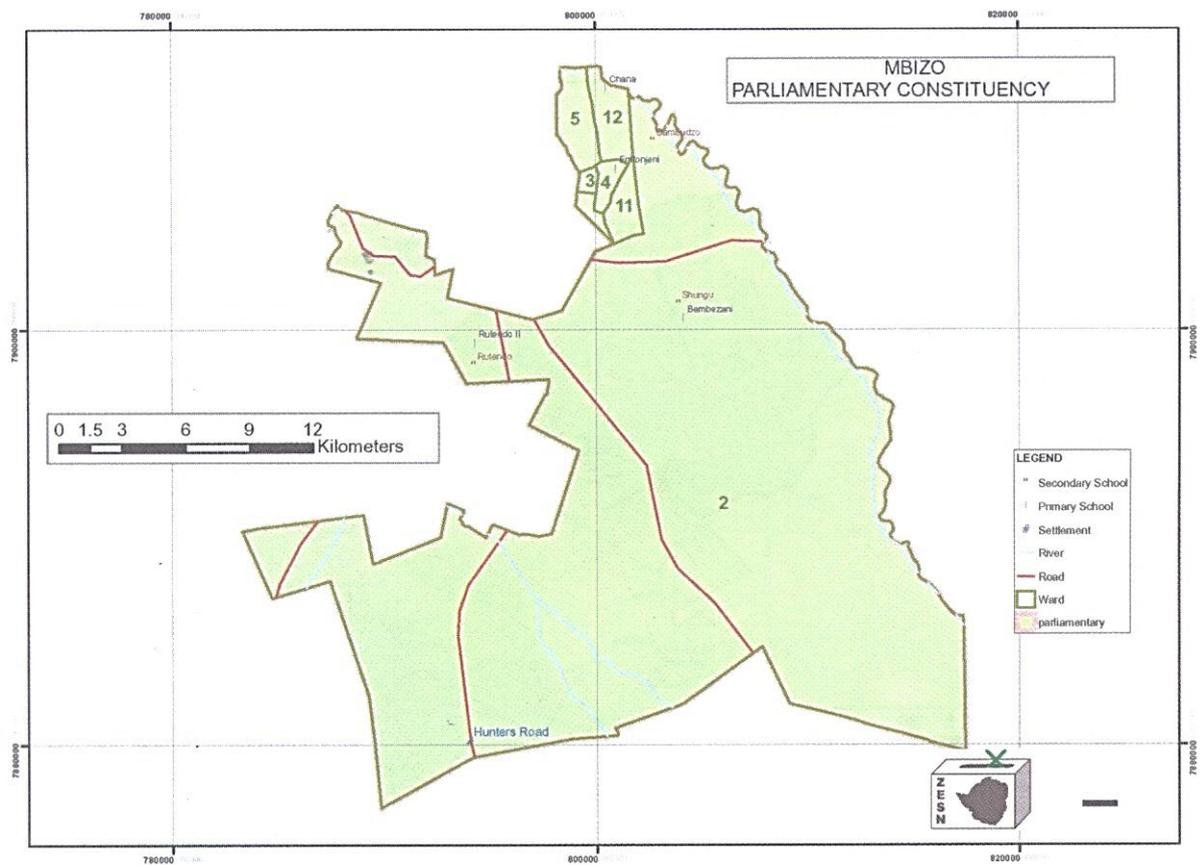


Zimbabwe Election Support Network



CONSTITUENCY PROFILE

Mbizo Constituency



Introduction

Mbizo constituency is located in the midlands province. This constituency emerged after the delimitation process of 2008 from the old Kwekwe constituency. Mbizo constituency falls under Kwekwe city council. The Midlands province consists of 28 constituencies. Mbizo constituency consists of wards 2, 3, 4, 5, 11 and 12. The province was allocated a total of 1289 polling stations in the July 2013 Elections by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC).

Population and demographics

With reference to the ZIMSTAT Census Report of 2012, the total population of Midlands province was 1 614 914 when the Census was conducted, with 776012 males and 838929 females. The 0–4 years age group had the largest proportion of the population of slightly above 15 percent. The proportions of the population gradually decreased as age increased up to age group 65–69 years then decreased within the age group 70–74 to slightly above one percent, thus the least proportion was in the age group 70–74 years. The population proportion increased slightly in age group 75+ to nearly 2 percent. It can be further observed that the proportion of the young population, that is those age less than 15 years, was 43 percent while that of the old aged population, 65 years and above was about 5 percent.

Previous Election Results

Since 1980 before the splitting of Kwekwe constituency, Emmerson Mnangagwa of ZANU PF was the Member of Parliament in that constituency up to the year 2000 when he was defeated by Blessing Chebundo of the MDC T. After the delimitation process in 2008 Settlement Chikwinya became Member of Parliament for Mbizo constituency. In 2013 the seat was won again by Settlement Chikwinya, defeating Murada Moses of ZANU PF by a margin of 1711 votes this reduced the 2008 margin when ZANU PF was defeated by 3552 votes.

Table 1: Election Results 2008 and 2013

Year	Candidates	Political Party	Number of Votes
2008 Election	Harmonised Chikwinya Settlement	MDC-T	6006
	Zhavairo Tafireyi Onesimo	ZANU PF	2454
	Madziva Innocent	MDC	889
2013 Elections	Harmonised Chikwinya Settlement	MDC-T	6917
	Murada Moses	ZANU PF	5206
	Madziva Innocent	MDC	720

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Background

The by-election for Mbizo constituency will be held on the 10th of June 2015. The seat fell vacant after the Member of Parliament Settlement Chikwinya was expelled from MDC-T, after joining the MDC Renewal and upon formation of the UMDC and was subsequently recalled from Parliament. According to the Constitution of Zimbabwe, Section 129 (1) (k) the seat of a Member of Parliament becomes vacant if the member ceases to belong to the political party of which he or she was a member when elected to Parliament. In accordance with the Electoral Act, Section 39 (2) the President proclaimed the date of the election as 10 June and 16 April 2015 as the date for nomination court.

Registered voters'

According to the ZEC 2013 Harmonised election report, there were 6 441 157 registered voters in the national register. In 2008 there were 24 704 registered voters¹ and in June 2013 the constituency had 24558 registered voters². The registered voters reduced by 146 or almost one percentage decrease. Plausible reasons could be transference of registrants and deletion of the deceased. However an in-depth analysis using the list-to-people and people-to-list methodologies would illuminate the reasons for the percentage decrease.

Voter Registration

Voter registration began on the 22nd to 28th of April 2015, ending exactly 12 days after nomination. The voter registration process included inspection of the voters roll and only new registrants were the ones required to register. Errors and omissions were also corrected. The ZEC established eight voter registration centres for the exercise, with centres opening for 7 days from 7am to 5pm.

Nomination process

The nomination process was conducted on the 16th of April and three candidates were duly nominated as candidates for Mbizo constituency:

Table 2: Contesting Candidates

Contesting Candidate	Political Party
Madziva Innocent	Transform Zimbabwe
Vongaishe Mupereri	ZANU PF
Onesimo Tafireyi Zhaware	Independent

Madziva Innocent contested the seat in 2008 and 2013, representing the MDC party and for these by-elections the candidate has defected to Transform Zimbabwe. The decision by the

¹ Source: Zimbabwe Electoral Commission; The Report on the Delimitation Exercise for the 2008 Harmonised Elections

² Voters roll of 19 June 2013

MDC formations to boycott any by-elections until further reforms might not be popular with everyone in the party.

ZANU PF is the only party that conducted primary elections on 11 April 2015.

Voter education

The Electoral Law stipulates that voter education provided by the ZEC should be adequate, accurate and unbiased; and to ensure that voter education provided by other persons is adequate and not misleading or biased in favour of any political party. Voter education is conducted not later than a week after proclamation of the elections. Voter education for pre-nomination and voter registration was conducted. The ZEC is focusing on voter registration for polling.

Areas for reforms

The following are the critical areas for reform:

- Media plurality and freedoms- this should include equality and equity in media coverage for all candidates in the by-election
- Freedom of assembly and association with political party and candidate of own choice. The electorate should enjoy their political rights- guaranteed by Section 67 of the Constitution.

Conclusion

ZESN urges the political parties contesting in the by election to observe peace and tolerate divergent views. ZESN calls upon the government to finalise the process of alignment of Electoral provisions to the Constitution, in particular voter registration provisions.