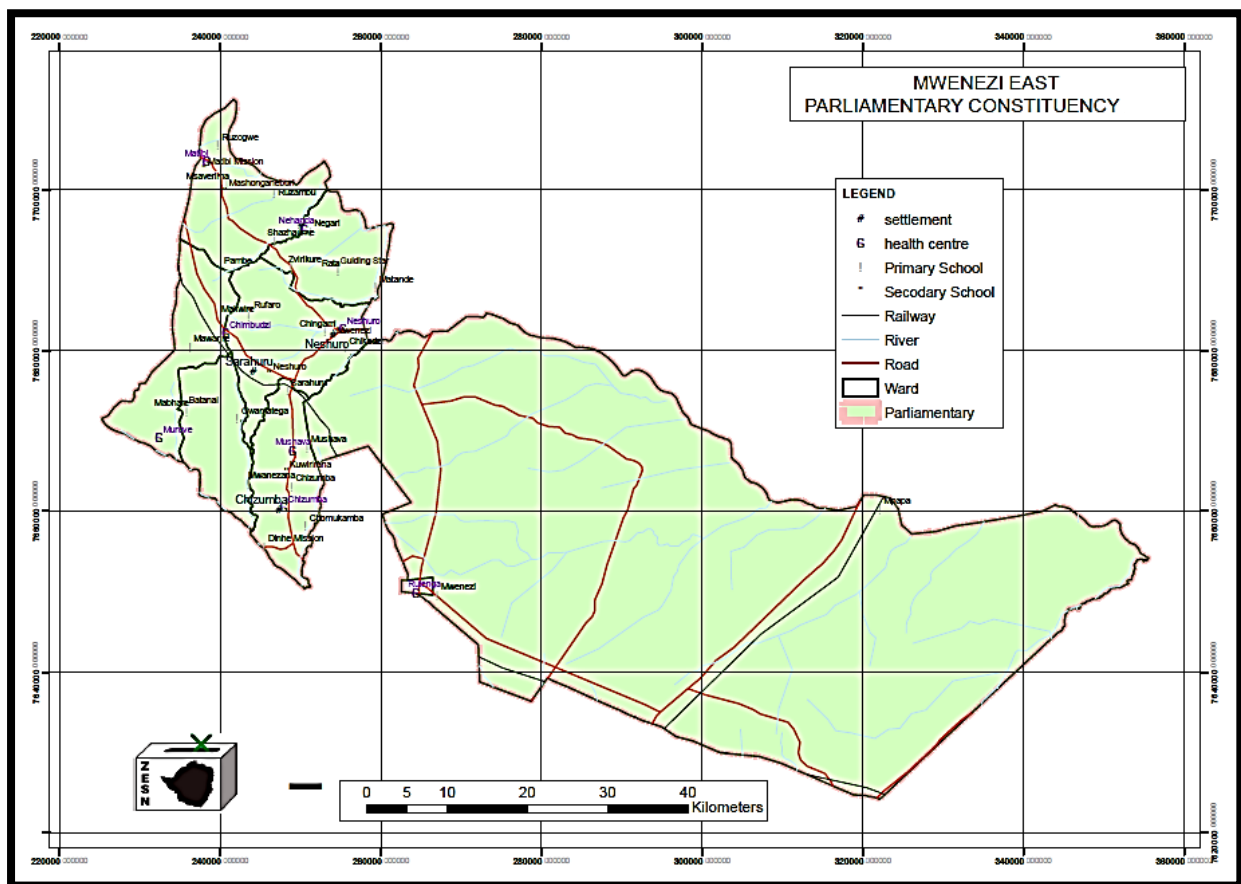


Zimbabwe Election Support Network



CONSTITUENCY PROFILE

Mwenezi East Constituency



Introduction

Mwenezi East constituency comprises of Masvosva, Chingwizi, Neshuro, Sarahuru, and Chingwizi and Chizumba consisting of 8 wards namely 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13 and 18. The Shangani and Karanga people live in this area. The main source of livelihood is communal farming which has been hampered by poor rain patterns. Employment prospects have diminished due to the closure of mines in Zvishavane and Chiredzi, residents of this community have instead turned to small-scale and artisanal mining. The constituency's proximity to South Africa provides an opportunity for residents to cross the border in search of jobs and engaging in informal trade. The 2014 Tokwe-Mukosi National disaster which displaced thousands of people has significantly increased the number of voters in Ward 13. ZEC indicated that there would be over 34, 000¹ people in Chingwizi alone which would qualify the Ward to be a standalone constituency. As a result of the increase in population in Chingwizi the Commission has increased the number of polling stations in Ward 13 by eleven (11) for the impending by-election.

Population Demographics

The Zimstat 2012 Census report puts the total population of Masvingo province at 1 485,090 of which 697,992 are males and 787,098 females. According to the report the population is relatively young with 45 percent aged below 15 years and about 7 percent aged 65 years and above. In the 2013 harmonised elections, Masvingo province had a total of 784,266 registered voters; while Mwenezi East had 33 278 registered voters² which constituted 88.1% of the constituency population.

Previous Election Results

Mwenezi East is regarded as a safe seat for ZANU-PF and its stronghold with the party winning the National Assembly seat consecutively since 2005. It was won by Kudakwashe Bhasikiti twice in a row in 2008 and 2013. Joshua Moyo of ZANU PF won the seat

¹ <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2016/12/20/zec-chingwizi-headache/>

² RAU 2013 report

uncontested in the 2015 by-election after Kudakwashe Bhasikiti was expelled from ZANU PF. He is currently contesting as a candidate for Zimbabwe People First (ZPF).

Table 1; shows the list previous contested candidates and their votes:

Year	Candidate	Political party	Number of votes	Winning candidate
2015	Joshua Moyo	ZANU PF	Unopposed	Joshua Moyo
2013	Kudakwashe Bhasikiti	ZANU PF	18,196	Kudakwashe Bhasikiti
	Purazeni Simbarashe	MDC	494	
	Marufu Philip	MDC-T	2,483	
2008	Bhasikiti Kudakwashe	ZANU PF	9,698	Kudakwashe Bhasikiti
	Chidlamakonho Tavengwa	INDEPENDENT	588	
	Murambwe Ananias	MDC-T	2,477	

Analysis of previous election results

In keeping with election trends in the constituency, in the 2013 elections ZANU PF increased the number of votes received by 8,498 signifying an increase of 87% for the party as compared to the 2008 election. The main opposition party the MDC-T on the other hand received 6 more votes in 2013 as compared to 2008, an increase of 0.24% in votes received.

Background to the by-election

On 3 February 2017, President Mugabe proclaimed 8 April 2017 as the date for the Mwenezi East by election. The national assembly seat fell vacant following the death of the incumbent ZANU PF Member of Parliament, Joshua Moyo, on 22 December 2016. Honourable Moyo won Mwenezi East unopposed since no other candidate submitted nomination papers in July 2015 when the Nomination Court sat in Masvingo. This was after he had successfully won the ZANU PF primary elections.

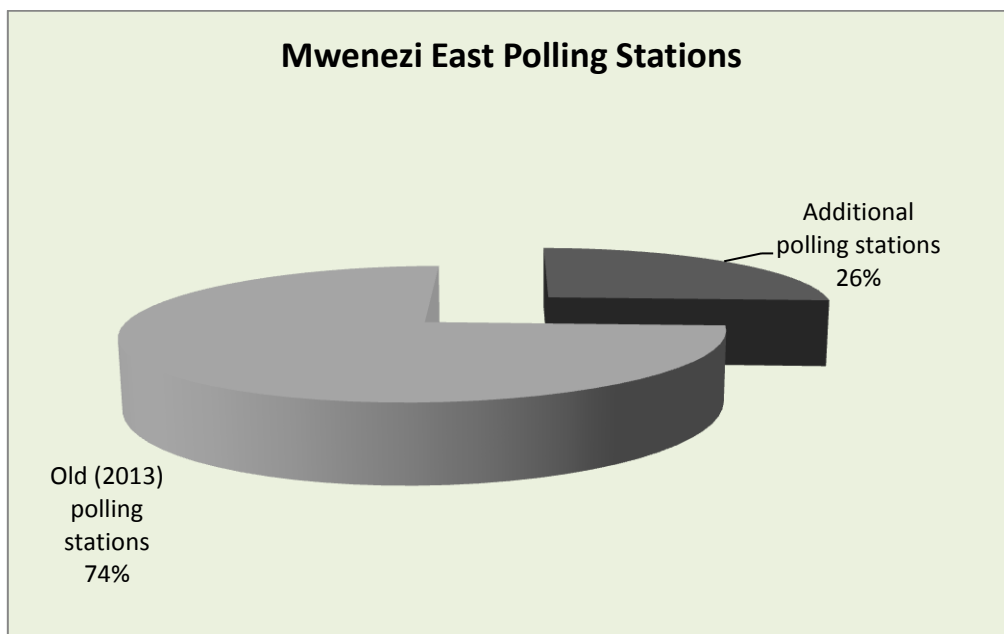
Political Environment

The political environment in Mwenezi East is reported to be relatively calm. No public political rallies have been observed but ZESN observers report that local leadership in ward 2

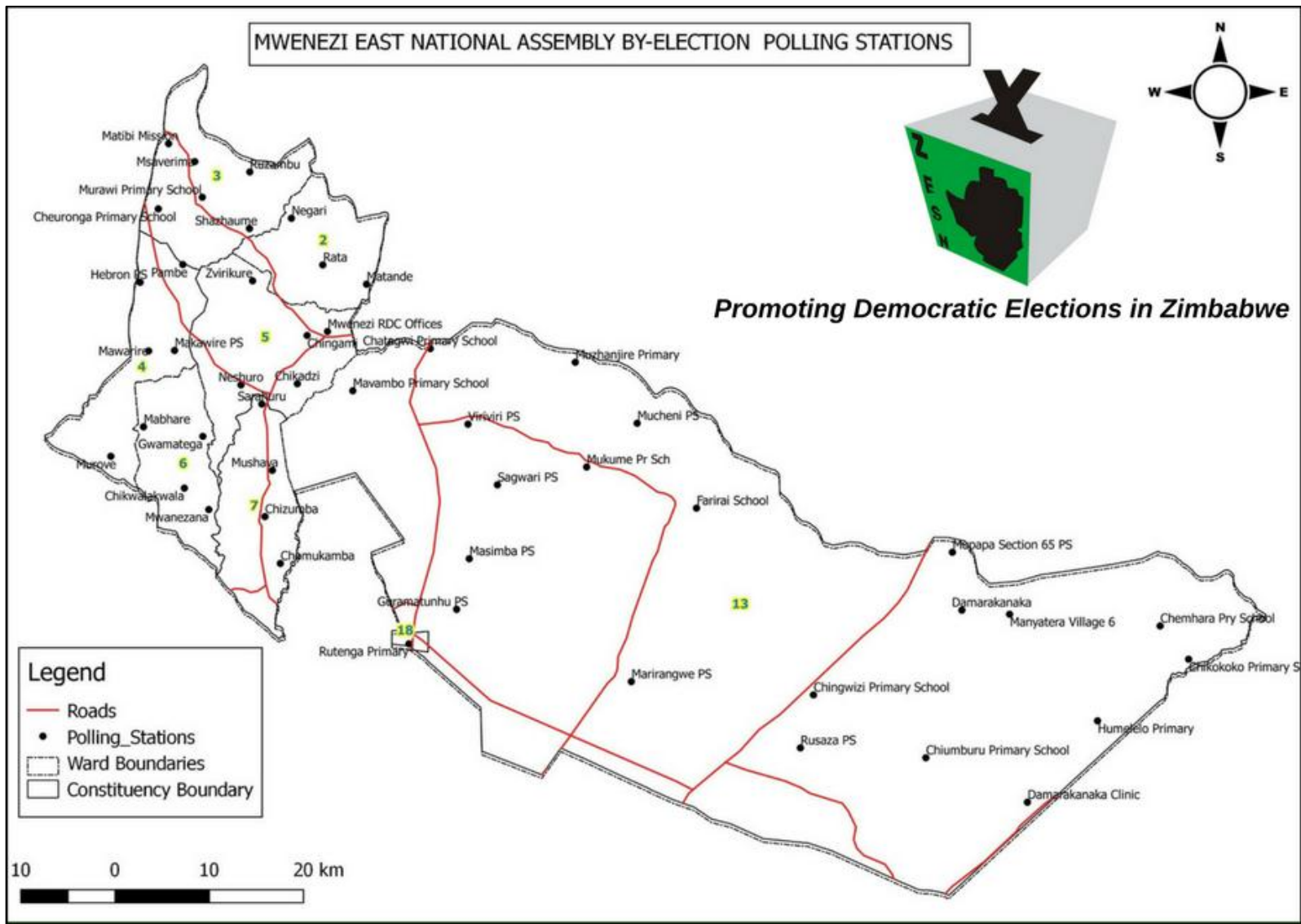
and 3 (village heads and/or chairpersons) are constantly gathering villagers to allegedly canvass support for the ZANU PF candidate. The Registrar General's office was in the constituency issuing identity cards especially to the Chingwizi residents whose identity particulars were destroyed by the floods. Other residents in other wards did not benefit from this exercise. The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) raised concern over the manner in which the identity documents were being issued in Chingwizi highlighting that the issuance of identity documents was being done along partisan lines. In addition, the ZPP report also claimed that villagers who did not have money to pay for obtaining the identity documents were being asked to pay using their livestock.³

Polling stations

16 new polling stations have been added to those that were used during the 2013 harmonised elections to bring the total number of polling stations to 62. ZEC also removed 4 polling stations from the 2013 polling station list namely; Mwenezi Secondary School (Ward 5), Bemberero Primary School, Petronela Primary School and Umfula Primary School all in Ward 13. Refer to Annex 1 for full list of polling stations as publicised by ZEC in the Herald newspaper. Of the 62 polling stations to be used in the by-election, 74% were used in 2013 and 26% are new.



³ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/?p=858>



Voter Registration Process

Voter registration is the prerequisite to any election in a democratic society and the ability to exercise the democratic right to vote is premised on the existence of a comprehensive, credible, complete, current, accurate, inclusive and dependable voters' roll, irrespective of the electoral system applied. ZEC conducted Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Mapping for polling station boundary verification from 14 to 17 February 2017 while polling station based voter registration exercise was set for the 23 February to 1 March 2017. As in previous by-elections ZEC will use the main polling station based voters' roll as well as the supplementary voters' roll. The inspection of the voters roll will be conducted as from the 23 – 27 March 2017.

Voter registration for the Nomination Court took place on the 8th February at the following places (to be verified);

- District Voter Registration Centre
- Provincial Voter Registration Centre
- Head Office Voter Registration Centre

Voter Education

ZEC scheduled voter education for pre-nomination from 6 to 8 February 2017. Voter education for Voter registration and inspection was scheduled for the 21 to 27 February while voter education for polling is set for the 27 March to 2 April 2017. As provided for in section 40C (b) of the electoral Act (2:13), it is hoped that the Commission would open up voter education to other players to increase public awareness on the road map to the by election. ZESN is making plans to be accredited to conduct voter education by sending a team to the voter education for polling for this by election which is scheduled to take place from 27 March to 2 April 2017. Voter education for polling will run from 27 March to 2 April 2017.

Contesting Parties and Nomination

ZANU PF and Zimbabwe People First (ZPF), National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) and Free Zimbabwe Congress successfully filed their nomination papers for Mwenezi East Parliamentary constituency at the Masvingo Magistrate court on 17 February 2017. The

Nomination Court sat 14 days after the Proclamation as provided for in Section 38(1)(b)(i) of the (Electoral Act Chapter 2:13). ZESN is concerned that all the candidates for the Mwenezi East Constituency by-election are male reflecting that women's appointment as candidates is still a challenge within political parties. Below is the list of successful candidates for the by election.

Table 2: List of Contesting Candidates for the Mwenezi East By-Election

Candidate	SEX	Political Party
Joosbi Omar	M	ZANU PF
Kudakwashe Bhasikiti	M	Zimbabwe People First (ZimPF)
Welcome Masuku	M	National constitutional Assembly (NCA)
Turner Nhango	M	Free Zim Congress

Biographies of the Mwenezi East By-election Candidates

Kudakwashe Bhasikiti (ZimPF)

Kudakwashe Bhasikiti is a well-seasoned politician and was the Member of Parliament for Mwenezi East twice before being expelled from ZANU PF on allegations of plotting to unconstitutionally topple President Mugabe from office⁴. Before being expelled from ZANU PF and government, Bhasikiti held the post of Provincial Affairs Minister for Masvingo.

Joosbi Omar (ZANU PF)

Joosbi Omar is a well-known business man in Masvingo with a number of business enterprises. Omar has contested and lost several ZANU PF primary elections. He contested in Masvingo urban a number of times before moving to Mwenezi East in the last by election held in 2015 where he also lost to the late Mwenezi East legislature, Joshua Moyo. There are reports that he built a school near Chingwizi area (Ward 13).

⁴ <http://www.herald.co.zw/zanu-pf-expels-7-suspends-13/>

Masuku Welcome (NCA)

Welcome Masuku was born and bred in Mwenezi. He joined the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) in January 2017 as a candidate for Mwenezi East Constituency. He has never been in any political party before other than being a regular voter. He is a Carpenter by profession and has been in the industry in Mwenezi since 2001.

Nhango Turner (Free Zim Congress)

Nhango Turner is a teacher by profession based in Mwenezi. He started his political carrier at the formation of MDC where he held the post of Treasurer to the MDC youth wing. He left MDC when it split until a month ago when he joined Free Zim Congress to contest for the Mwenezi East by election.

Conclusion

ZESN urges all contesting candidates and their parties in the by- election to observe peace and tolerate divergent views.

Annexure 1: LIST OF POLLING STATIONS MWENEZI EAST

	Constituency	Ward Number	Name of Polling station	Facility
1	Mwenezi East	2	Matande Primary Sch	School
2	Mwenezi East	2	Negari Primary Sch	School
3	Mwenezi East	2	Rata Primary Sch	School
4	Mwenezi East	3	Chourongwe Primary Sch	School
5	Mwenezi East	3	Matibi Mission	School
6	Mwenezi East	3	Murawi Primary Sch	School
7	Mwenezi East	3	Musaverima Primary Sch	School
8	Mwenezi East	3	Ruzambu Primary Sch	School
9	Mwenezi East	3	Shazhaume Primary Sch	School
10	Mwenezi East	4	Hebron Primary Sch	School
11	Mwenezi East	4	Makawire Primary Sch	School
12	Mwenezi East	4	Mawarire Primary Sch	School

13	Mwenezi East	4	Murove Health Center	Clinic
14	Mwenezi East	4	Pambe Primary Sch	School
15	Mwenezi East	5	Chikadzi Primary School	School
16	Mwenezi East	5	Chingami Primary Sch	School
17	Mwenezi East	5	St Vitalis Primary	School
18	Mwenezi East	5	Neshuro Sec Sch	School
19	Mwenezi East	5	Zvirikure Primary Sch	School
20	Mwenezi East	6	Chikwalakwala Primary Sch	School
21	Mwenezi East	6	Gwamatenga Primary School	School
22	Mwenezi East	6	Mabhare Primary Sch	School
23	Mwenezi East	6	Mwenezana Primary Sch	School
24	Mwenezi East	7	Chizumba Primary Sch	School
25	Mwenezi East	7	Chomukamba Primary Sch	School
26	Mwenezi East	7	Mushava Primary Sch	School
27	Mwenezi East	7	Sarahuru Primary Sch	School
28	Mwenezi East	13	Batanai Khomanani Primary	School
29	Mwenezi East	13	Chatagwi Primary	School
30	Mwenezi East	13	Chemhara Primary Sch	School
31	Mwenezi East	13	Chikokoko Primary Sch	School
32	Mwenezi East	13	Chiumburu Primary Sch	School
33	Mwenezi East	13	Chingwizi Primary	School
34	Mwenezi East	13	Damarakanaka Clinic	School
35	Mwenezi East	13	Farai Primary Sch	School
36	Mwenezi East	13	Guramatunhu Primary Sch	School
37	Mwenezi East	13	Humelelo Primary	School
38	Mwenezi East	13	J.B Primary	School
39	Mwenezi East	13	Machipisa Dip Tank	Tent
40	Mwenezi East	13	Makambi Irrigation Scheme	Tent
41	Mwenezi East	13	Manyatera Village 6	Tent
42	Mwenezi East	13	Marirangwe Primary Sch	School
43	Mwenezi East	13	Masakwe Primary School	School
44	Mwenezi East	13	Masangula Primary	School

45	Mwenezi East	13	Masimba Primary Sch	School
46	Mwenezi East	13	Mavambo Primary	School
47	Mwenezi East	13	Mucheni Primary Sch	School
48	Mwenezi East	13	Mukume Primary Sch	School
49	Mwenezi East	13	Mulongwezi (BJB) Dip Tank	Tent
50	Mwenezi East	13	Munhundishe Primary	School
51	Mwenezi East	13	Mupapa Section 65 Primary Sch	School
52	Mwenezi East	13	Muzhanjire Primary	School
53	Mwenezi East	14	Negari Village	Tent
54	Mwenezi East	15	Nyuni Primary	Tent
55	Mwenezi East	16	Pelandava Primary	School
56	Mwenezi East	13	Rusaza Primary Sch	School
57	Mwenezi East	13	Sagwari Primary Sch	School
58	Mwenezi East	13	Tagarika Primary	School
59	Mwenezi East	13	Tokwe Mukosi Primary	School
60	Mwenezi East	13	Vilivili Primary Sch	School
61	Mwenezi East	13	Reformed Church in Zimbabwe	Church
62	Mwenezi East	18	Rutenga Primary Sch	School

Source: ZEC