

# ZIMBABWE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK



## ISSUE 3 PRE-ELECTION LONG TERM OBSERVER (LTO) UPDATE

29 July 2018

### **ENVIRONMENT IN CONSTITUENCIES**

In general, the environment in the past few days was reported to be peaceful. No cases of violence were reported by LTOs.

LTOs reports show that, in violation of the law, political parties were still campaigning on Sunday 29 July 2018, in most of the constituencies around the country. Most of the reported cases involved the ZANU-PF and MDC Alliance parties. eg. MDC and ZANUPF were winding up their campaigns in Masvingo Province, Gutu South, and distributing party regalia. The same was reported for Silobela and other constituencies. In Harare, the aspiring PRC National Assembly candidate conducted door to door campaign, distributing flyers while in Headlands, ZANU-PF; CODE; and Built Zimbabwe Alliance were putting posters at Chitsva Business Centre.

### **ZEC ACTIVITIES**

ZESN LTOs reported that the ZEC is receiving polling station materials and ballots, and that that polling staff had been deployed to their respective polling stations. No major reports about problems with the delivery of election materials was reported during this period.

LTOs observed voter education campaigns that were conducted within the reporting period by ZEC. These reports were received from 96.8% of constituencies where LTOs are resident. The campaigns include information about the election date, how to mark the ballots, secrecy of the ballot, and polling station location.

### **CONFIDENCE IN THE ZEC**

As part of their long term observation effort, LTO conducted a survey which gauged the level of confidence that people have in the impartiality of the ZEC and the ability of the ZEC to successfully conduct elections. Stakeholders perceptions about the impartiality of the ZEC remained fairly stable, whereas confidence in the ZEC to hold successful elections showed improvements.

*Do the majority of stakeholders met with have confidence in the impartiality of the ZEC?*

<b>July 21</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>July 27</b>	<b>%</b>
Lots of confidence	31.0	Lots of confidence	30.6
Some confidence	54.0	Some confidence	56.3
Very little confidence	14.9	Very little confidence	13.1

*Do the majority of stakeholders have confidence in the ability of the election commission to conduct the elections successfully?*

<b>July 21</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>July 27</b>	<b>%</b>
Lots of confidence	25.9	Lots of confidence	32.5
Some confidence	57.5	Some confidence	56.3
Very little confidence	16.7	Very little confidence	11.3

**ABUSE OF STATE RESOURCES**

Abuse of state resources was not reported as a problem by 77.5 percent of the teams between July 21 and 27. However, in 22.5 percent of the areas observed LTOs reported one or more instances of abuse of resources. The major areas were the distribution of government aid/food/equipment at a party event, the use of government vehicles, use of government buildings or lands for political parties, and government personnel speaking at rally/meetings.

LTOs reported ZANU-PF was the greatest abuser of state resources between the periods of July 21 to 27. ZANU-PF was reported by observers in 161 instances of abusing state resources, whereas all other parties combined were reported seven times for abuse of state resources.

<b>TYPE OF ABUSE</b>	<b>ZANU-PF</b>	<b>MDC</b>	<b>NPF</b>
Government vehicles for campaigning	30	1	0
Government buildings/land for campaigning (not for others)	18	0	0
Government officials speaking at events	30	0	0
Campaigning at government events	16	0	0
Government PA/staging not allowed for others	9	0	0
Government aid, food, or equipment given at events	58	4	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>

### **Incidents in past three days – Reports covering 26-28 July**

**There was a total of 19 incidents of intimidation reported by LTOs during this period.** Representing incidents in 10% of constituencies reporting. 13 constituencies (8%) reported that this represented an increase while 33% of constituencies reporting said it was a decrease. 59% said about the same.

<b>Traditional leaders</b> trying to force people into accepting assisted voting in constituency	10.1% (17 incidents)
Threats of food aid being stopped if you don't vote for <b>ZANU PF</b>	19.0% (32 incidents)
Threats of food aid being stopped if you don't vote for <b>MDC Alliance</b>	3.0% (5 incidents)
Threats that support for local projects will be withdrawn if the people don't vote for <b>ZANU PF</b>	16.7% (28 incidents)
Threats that support for local projects will be withdrawn if the people don't vote for <b>MDC Alliance</b>	1.2% (2 incidents)

### **Examples of Incidents included:**

- Harare: Voters were told that “If they vote for MDC councillors services like road construction, water supply, refuse collection and roads will not be available since a ZANU PF President won't work with MDC councillors.”
- Masvingo: Citizens were told that “People who go to MDC rallies will no longer receive food supplies or fertilizer.”

- Kadzimwenje, Mashonaland Central: Citizens were told that “Elections can only be elections if Zanu PF win.”
- Mashonaland East: One serious incident was reported of a death threat against an independent candidate. The case has been reported to the police.

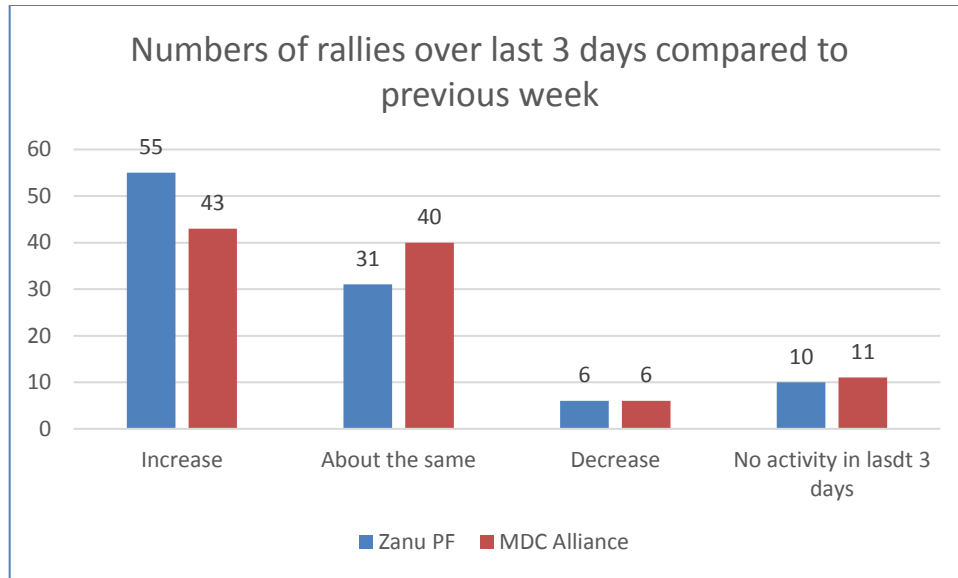
8.3 percent (14 constituencies) of the 210 constituencies were reported an increase in intimidation between July 26 to 28, whereas 58.3 percent showed no change.

### **POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVITIES AND RALLIES**

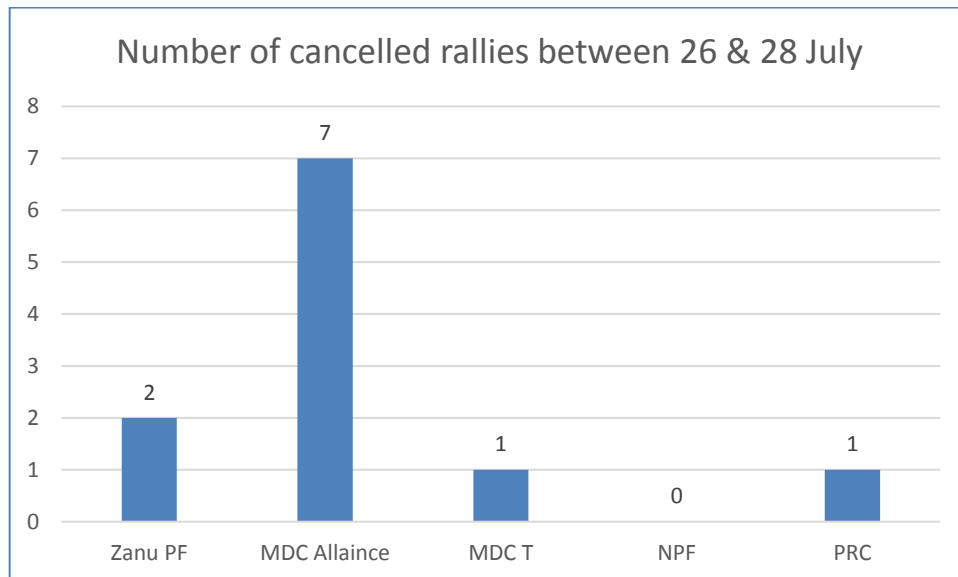
Rallies have remained peaceful between July 26 to 28. However, there have been some examples of forced bussing of people and food distribution at rallies (example: a ZANU PF rally at Karvinda Primary school, Midlands).

About half of LTOs reported that political parties have increased their activities and rallies over the last three days (July 26-28) and were

LTO reports indicate that the some citizens are concerned about the location of polling stations that are located near prominent Billboards of the ZANU PF and MDC Alliance presidential candidates. Citizens expressed concern that perhaps the presence of these billboards near polling stations could fuel tensions among citizens with different political preferences. In addition political parties’ electronic campaigns continued on Sunday despite prohibition of campaigns 24 hours before the election as stipulated at law.



**Rallies were cancelled in 12 locations where observers were present between July 26 to 28.** The reasons for rally cancellation include two instances of refused permission by security forces, one instance of intimidation, and nine /other or unknown.



**In conclusion ZESN urges all Zimbabweans to go out and exercise their democratic right by voting in the 30 July Harmonised Elections.**