
ZIMBABWE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK



SUPPORT ZEC TO CONDUCT POLLING STATION BASED VOTER REGISTRATION

06 March 2014- The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) calls upon the government to provide resources to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) to conduct polling station based voter registration and to come up with a new polling station based voters' roll.

Section 239 (c), (d) and (e) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe mandates ZEC to register voters, compile the voters' rolls as well as ensure proper custody and maintenance of the voters' rolls. Furthermore, the amendments in Section 22A of the Electoral Act introduce the polling station based voters' roll. With the polling- based voters' roll one can only vote at one specific polling station where his/her name appears in the voters' roll unless where exceptions apply. Given these powers enshrined in the Constitution, ZESN urges the government to ensure that ZEC is sufficiently resourced with technical, financial and human resources.

ZESN believes that we are at the right time in the electoral cycle to implement these new provisions which require and mandate ZEC to conduct a fresh voter registration process of voters. ZESN reiterates its calls to the government to allocate adequate funding to the Commission for the process which will result in a new voters' roll for Zimbabwe. A comprehensive voters' roll contributes immensely to the success or failure and credibility of any election hence the need for the government and ZEC to take this process seriously. Furthermore, ZEC should initiate the debate on the various methodologies, technical requirements that can be adopted including voter education requirements and the stakeholders that can be involved in the process.

In the run up to the 31 July Harmonised elections, the voter registration process was marred by numerous challenges such as lack of adequate information, inadequate time, resource constraints, lack of professionalism and inadequate human resource. These adversely affected the election with various observer groups citing the chaotic registration process as one of the major shortfalls of the 2013 harmonised elections. The African Union Election Observer Mission (AUEOM) report highlighted the short timeframe allocated to the voter registration process which resulted in exclusion of citizens including the 'aliens'.

The gaps witnessed in the registration process which according to statistics released by the ZESN led to the systematic disenfranchisement of an estimated 750 000 potential voters especially in the urban areas as many of them failed to register due to the slow processing of people, limited number of days spent in a ward, lack of adequate personnel and inadequate publicity about the process as well as low stakeholder participation.

It is against this backdrop of challenges witnessed in the last election that ZESN calls for the adoption of voter registration methodologies that will ensure inclusivity, accuracy, comprehensiveness and completeness to avoid challenges that marred the process in 2013.

Accordingly the Registrar-General's office should hand over the voters' roll to ZEC which should have full control of the voter registration, maintenance and custodianship of the voters' roll. The government should therefore fully capacitate ZEC by timeously availing adequate resources to the Commission to enable it to execute its mandated roles. // **End**

**ZIMBABWE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK
PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE**



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT

Dr. Rev. Solomon Zwana ZESN Chairperson-+263 774198938
Rindai Chipfunde-Vava ZESN National Director -+263712415902
info@zesn.net/ zesn2011@zesn.net or visit www.zesn.org.zw