

Zimbabwe Election Support Network

PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

ELECTORAL REFORMS TRACKING REPORT

JANUARY – JULY 2021





1.1 INTRODUCTION

This tracking report covers the period January to July 2021. It seeks to highlight developments in the electoral environment whether positive or negative, that have occurred during the period under consideration.

Following the harmonized 2018 polls, the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) compiled a Compendium of recommendations from the different Election Observer Missions (EOMs) that observed those elections. It thereafter lodged a parliamentary petition that was duly embraced and considered by the Parliament of Zimbabwe (POZ). The petition sought to implore POZ to address a number of administrative, legal and political reform areas in the electoral landscape of Zimbabwe, from the pre-election through the election to the post-election period.

These included among others, the inclusivity of the electoral process, the roles of the various electoral actors and others.

Pursuant to the petition ZESN drafted and submitted to the POZ, a Comprehensive Electoral Amendment Bill that would form the basis for electoral reform discourse in Zimbabwe. The lay Bill was duly received by the POZ through the Committee on Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs for its consideration. The Bill is a useful resource for advocacy around electoral reform for stakeholders across the board, from civil society through Members of Parliament (MPs) and relevant public institutions. The petition by ZESN synthesized the legal, political and administrative issues for reform in Zimbabwe. These ranged from legal issues, electoral environment issues, through to media and administrative issues, among a host of other issues. If addressed, these would contribute immensely to making Zimbabwe's future polls more credible and less likely to yield contested results. Zimbabwe has had contested poll outcomes since the turn of the century, with a resultant polarized political environment.

ZESN continues with its advocacy efforts towards electoral reform. These revolve around the entire spectrum of electoral issues including the electoral environment, the independence of the Electoral Management Body (EMB), voter education, and the political environment, among others. In this regard ZESN continues to engage the relevant stakeholders, including the POZ, the EMB—the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), along other Constitutional Chapter 12 Commissions, political parties, members of the public, and civil society organizations (CSOs).

This report tracks developments in the electoral field within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic which has affected all countries globally. While some countries have adapted to conducting electoral activities under the pandemic, Zimbabwe has been selective. Consequent to the pandemic, by-elections due have not been held as per the constitutional dictates. The pandemic has been given as the basis for the failure to comply with the Electoral Law. At the same time, it has appeared apparent that some gatherings have been taking place throughout the lockdown, raising questions about the sincerity of the authorities.

This report takes a thematic approach to the issues covered— the legal developments; women's political participation; youth; and media issues.



1.2 METHODOLOGY

This tracking report analysis is premised mainly on desktop research based on the thematic areas highlighted above. It also examines the bill tracker published by the Inter-Ministerial Taskforce [1] on the Alignment of Legislation to the Constitution. It builds on the last report that tracked developments on these indicators for the previous period. In addition, ZESN also analyses information gathered from both formal and informal meetings with key policy makers, such as Members of Parliament, representatives of various Ministries and Chapter 12 institutions, among others.

Colour codes will be used in this report to illustrate improvement or lack of it in the electoral environment on the thematic areas covered in the report, as highlighted below:




- **Legal developments**
- **Women's political participation;**
- **Youths' political participation; and**
- **The media space.**

The report analyses developments under a number of themes such as legal developments, women's political participation, youths' political participation as well as the media space.

Three colour codes/scoring are used in the report:

"Scoring"

The scores below are based on an analysis of the relevant indicators with respect to the electoral reforms. They note and record changes or their absence in relation to elections.

	Red	No movement on the issue
	Orange	Some movement under the theme was observed
	Green	Reforms under the theme were implemented



2.1. LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS THAT HAVE A BEARING ON THE ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ELECTIONS

The legal infrastructure of any given country is critical to the credibility of the polls conducted under it. Zimbabwe is no different. The legal environment is key in creating an enabling environment for democratic elections in Zimbabwe. Subsequent to the 2018 harmonized elections international and local observers made some recommendations to the Government and Parliament of Zimbabwe to reform the electoral legal framework to enhance and deepen electoral democracy. Identified gaps in the legal framework have been a source of electoral contestation of poll outcomes because the current electoral laws fall short of codifying expected democratic principles for managing democratic elections. In other words, the legal framework has inherent weaknesses that makes it fall short of standards set by international, continental and regional benchmarks for the conduct of credible elections.

The major legal developments that took place during the period under review relate to amendments to the 2013 Constitution of Zimbabwe. An amendment to the Constitution that was made during the life of the 8th Parliament of Zimbabwe having been contested earlier, fell for determination by the Constitutional Court in 2019 which controversially empowered the 9th Parliament to address illegalities that were observed with the parliamentary process. The Amendment was duly endorsed by the 9th Parliament in the period under review, thereby dovetailing with the passing of Constitutional Amendment Number 2 into law. Other than Constitutional Amendment Number 2, no other major legal reforms were implemented.

This report takes a thematic approach to determine whether changes to the legal infrastructure during the period under review were such as to impact positively on the conduct of future elections in Zimbabwe.

THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE ZIMBABWE ELECTORAL COMMISSION (ZEC):

No changes were made to the legal framework that enhanced the independence of the Electoral Commission. If anything, some of the changes are potentially negative to the extent that they are viewed as concentrating power in the hands of the Executive, who are contestants for political power themselves.

REVIEWING LEGAL PROVISIONS AROUND VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTERS ROLL

No legal changes took place during the period under review that enhanced voter registration and the voters' roll. The status quo still obtains. The impact to the principle of equality of votes arising from changes made during an earlier period to the Census and Statistics Act still remains to be seen as the census itself is yet to be conducted.

VOTER EDUCATION AND ELECTION OBSERVATION

No legal provisions relating to voter education and election observation were enacted during the period under review. It will be recalled that there were recommendations around this issue by international, regional and local election observer missions to the 2018 harmonized elections.

TIGHTENING THE PROVISIONS ON RESULTS MANAGEMENT TO ENHANCE TRANSPARENCY AND REDUCE SUSPICION AND RESULTS CONTESTATION

No legal changes took place during the period under review. The recommendations contained in the ZESN petition, which captures the recommendations of several election observer missions, still cry for attention.

STREAMLINING THE ELECTION DISPUTE MECHANISM

One of the defining features and achievements of the 2013 Constitution was the watering down of the Executive dominance in the governance system. The Constitution sought to move away from a situation in which the Executive had, under the previous constitutional dispensation, concentrated power in itself, to a point where their influence permeated all structures and levels of the State. This included judicial appointments. Under the 2013 Constitution judicial appointments would not be an exclusive affair of the Executive, but would be done through a transparent process that involved public interviews conducted by a committee of Parliament.

Major changes took place during the period under review which have a bearing on the election dispute mechanism. As a result of Constitutional Amendment Number 2, the President now appoints judges to superior courts that is; the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court. Disputes arising from Presidential elections are handled by the Constitutional Court with judges appointed by the President. The President is a political contestant in elections. This brings into question the independence of the Constitutional Court in handling Presidential election disputes. The independence of the judiciary is key in any democracy and it appears that the changes effected by Constitutional Amendment Number 2 undermine the independence of the judiciary. The political contestation around the extension of the term of the Chief Justice raised eyebrows. Amendments to provisions on the tenure of judicial officers, in particular that of the Chief Justice and the Deputy Chief Justice, illustrated the problems with tinkering with judicial appointments by the Executive. These changes were a major reversal, and are likely to have a bearing on any future electoral disputes that make their way to the courts of law.

DOMESTICATION OF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS TO WHICH ZIMBABWE IS A PARTY

In February 2018, Zimbabwe signed the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), amid hope for political reforms in Zimbabwe. In order for the Charter to be legally binding there must be ratification followed by domestication of the same. This is because Zimbabwe uses a dualist approach to international agreements and instruments. Nothing was done during the period under review to domesticate this Charter or any other international legal instrument that has a bearing on electoral processes.

ENHANCING ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION THROUGH CLEARER LEGAL PROVISIONS AND ELECTORAL PRACTICE:

No legal changes have taken place during the period under review that impact on electoral administration.

REVIEWING PROVISIONS ON POLITICAL PARTY REGISTRATION AND REGULATION

The legal framework on political party regulation has not changed. No changes took place during the period under review.

REVIEWING PROVISIONS AROUND THE DELIMITATION OF ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES:

No legal changes took place during the period under review. It remains to be seen if the census process will be completed in time to contribute towards electoral boundary delimitation. Section 158 of the Constitution provides that a general election must be held every five-years. The Census and Statistics Amendment Act (2020) brought forward the Census to be completed by the end of 2021. However a new development emerged when the government indicated in its fifteenth post-cabinet press briefing on the 18th May, 2021 that the actual population census will start in April 2022, with the Census results only expected in August 2022, while the boundary Delimitation process will commence in October 2022.

TIGHTENING PROVISIONS ON THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN ELECTIONS:

Given the number and content of recommendations by EOMs from previous elections in Zimbabwe, it would have been anticipated that there would be reviews of the legal framework. An Integrity and Ethics Committee for the traditional leaders is anticipated by law but is yet to be operationalized. No legal provisions were passed during the period under review to change the legal framework governing traditional leaders in elections.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE AND INCLUSIVITY:

No legal changes took place to enhance the inclusivity of Zimbabwean elections during the period under review. While it is a matter of public record that millions of citizens in the Diaspora are effectively excluded from voting, unless they are on State service, persons in lawful custody or prisons and medical personnel on duty on Election Day are also excluded, the legal framework has not been reviewed to include these among other excluded categories of citizens. The Constitution grants every citizen the right to vote [6].

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT:

While no election-specific laws were passed during the period under review, it ought to be acknowledged that the COVID-19 regulatory framework has had a fundamental effect on civil and political rights. Due to the regulations, the conduct of by-elections to fill many vacancies in the National Assembly and in local authorities have been suspended. The right to assemble has also been suspended by virtue of the regulations, which limits the number of people that can gather. Thus freedom of association and attendant rights have also been impacted upon. The COVID-19 regulations have seen a push-back on civil liberties protected by the Bill of Rights in the Constitution.

The Zimbabwe Public Complaints Commission Bill, 2020, gazetted in November 2020, was at the time of the writing of this report, making its slow passage in the National Assembly after which it would be transmitted to the Senate for its legislative processes to continue. The Bill seeks to establish a public complaints mechanism against the conduct of the security agencies of the State. The Executive were compelled into gazetting the Bill by litigation [7]. The Bill is a constitutional imperative pursuant to section 210 of the Constitution. In its current form the Bill does not seem to give full effect to the letter and spirit of section 210 of the Constitution. Its passage would bring an improvement to the political environment, as the security agencies have been accused of abusing the civil and political rights of citizens.

The Police Amendment Bill, gazetted during the period under review, makes no reference to the Zimbabwe Public Complaints Commission Bill, and ignores a number of pertinent issues towards subjecting the police service to accountability mechanisms. For this reason it appears as a missed opportunity towards a thorough review of police legislation that would address values in the 2013 Constitution.

The tendency towards intrusive state behavior is reflected by the use of Executive orders in the form of the Postal and Telecommunications (Telecommunications Traffic Monitoring System) Regulations, gazetted in April 2021, in which authorities will be able to gather data on telephone calls under the guise of "generating reliable statistics." The regulations will allow the government to obtain data on all calls, who called who and for how long the conversation took place, along with other information. It appears as one of the negative legal developments that in the long term will impact on the political environment, in a country in which trust of some public institutions is yet to be gained across the political spectrum. The right to privacy is guaranteed under section 57 of the Constitution. The Regulations above seem to be a serious threat to the privacy of communications of individuals, protected by section 57(d) of the founding document. The Regulations, in the context of Zimbabwean politics, will also affect freedom of expression as the feeling of private communications being listened to will affect telephone users.

"Scoring":

Amendments to the Constitution:

	Constitutional Amendment Number 2 saw some movement as it changed some election related matters.
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Review of the Legal Framework for Elections:

	Most areas of the legal framework remained as was the case during the last election cycle.
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3.1. MARGINALIZED GROUP'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS

The 2013 Constitution provides for equality and non-discrimination. This frowns upon the marginalization of sections of the population, including in areas of political representation.

The founding document acknowledges among other things, marginalization of women as a historical fact that needs redress. The constitutional imperative is gender parity in all areas of human endeavor [8]. The Constitution enjoins the State to work towards gender parity. Zimbabwe also committed itself through such legal instruments as the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development to attain gender parity to address historical imbalances. This would effectively facilitate women's full and equal participation in all electoral processes.

The ZESN previous tracking report states that, "Appropriate provisions must be made that make it mandatory for political parties to observe quotas for women and that there must be gender parity backed by law in all decision making positions and institutions."

As stated above[9], during the period under review, the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Number 2 Bill was passed into law and became Constitution Amendment Act No. 2 of 2021. This effectively extended the women's quota in the National Assembly for another 10 years up until 2033, thereby securing the 60 additional seats for women.

Alongside the extension of the women's quota in the National Assembly, it was also stated that the introduction of a women's quota to local government would guarantee a 30% increase in the representation of women in local government [10]. The Constitution Amendment No. 2 Act also provides for 10 youths to be elected to the National Assembly on a party list basis, which has to list male and female candidates alternately. This will have the effect of adding 5 additional women to the membership of the National Assembly under the youth quota (in addition to the 60 women under the women's quota whose life will be extended). It is noted that while this amounts to a change, it is unlikely that gender parity will be attained in the 2023 elections based on this electoral framework.

ENHANCING PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN, THE YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITY IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS AS VOTERS AND CANDIDATES:

Constitutional Amendment Number 2 brought in changes that have a bearing on women's representation in Parliament. Whereas the women's quota introduced by the 2013 Constitution was bound to end in 2023, Amendment Number 2 extended that quota by another ten years by increasing the number of parliaments from two to four parliaments [2]. Further, the Amendment also introduced a quota for young persons: ten young persons would be incorporated through a quota system into the membership of the National Assembly. Within that quota, a young women's quota would also be applied, meaning that five young women would make it to Parliament. A proportional representation system would be used. [3] While the Amendment did mention persons with disabilities, it was short on details for implementation. It remains debatable whether these changes will enhance the full participation of women and young persons in representative and elective bodies given the experience of the years during which the quota system has been implemented since adoption of the 2013 Constitution.

Constitutional Amendment Number 2 also introduced a quota system for provincial councils to enhance women's inclusion at the lower tiers of elected institutions. While the constitutional imperative is gender parity [4], the Amendment pegged the minimum at 30% women's representation [5]. In the absence of a clearer and more effective legal framework on the inclusion of women, young persons and persons with disability it would seem that these changes will remain as symbols of tokenism that will not address the values of the 2013 Constitution on these matters.

Score and Comment

Whilst progress has been made to increase the representation of women in Parliament and Local Government by extending and expanding the women's quota at both national and local government levels as highlighted above, this remains inadequate to entrench 50/50 gender parity in decision making. As observed since adoption of the 2013 Constitution, the women's quota seats have resulted in a decrease of women elected by direct votes to represent constituencies, thereby failing to increase women's representation to the desired 50% representation.

The Zimbabwe Gender Commission (ZGC) adopted a Gender and Inclusion Policy, which is a positive development that is in line with gender responsive legislation that shapes the degree to which women are treated on a non-discriminatory basis in all electoral processes. The policy however does not have the force of law.

As appears in the scoring below, it was noted that there was some change that was election related.

“Scoring”

	There were some progressive changes introduced by Constitutional Amendment Number 2. Nevertheless the changes are unlikely to facilitate full participation of marginalized groups in electoral processes as the quotas are not reflective of the demographics of the country
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4.1. DEVELOPMENTS WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH

The ZESN Petition to POZ notes as follows:

'The legal framework must provide for youth participation as voters, candidates and as decision-makers.'

It was noted that the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 2) Act, passed during the period under review, amended section 124 of the Constitution to provide for a youth quota system in the National Assembly for the first time in the history of Zimbabwe. The provision also extended the women's quota in the National Assembly for another ten years from 2023.

It was also noted that while the constitutional change guarantees some youthful representatives in the National Assembly, it appears that the number of representatives contained in the Amendment Act was not arrived at through a scientific approach. There is nothing to suggest a link with the country's demography, which in the last census in 2012 suggested that the country had a youthful population. Youth within the voting age range, according to ZEC figures for 2018 registered voters constituted 35% of the population (18–35 years). The submission therefore persists that the legal changes themselves do not address challenges to youth access to public office in Zimbabwe. The measures seem to entrench tokenism.

The analysis below is premised on the ZESN Compendium of Election Observers Recommendations 2018, which lists election observer missions' recommendations on youth, among others.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION AND THE YOUTH:

The ZESN petition made recommendations on the administrative practices around the electoral cycle that could impact positively on the participation and inclusion of young persons in electoral matters. It was envisaged that there was need to involve the youth as election candidates and in decision making. A review of candidate fees would impact on youth participation. No changes in this regard have taken place during the period under review.

VOTER REGISTRATION:

For purposes of inclusion, it was recommended that ZEC targets under-registered groupings, who included young first time voters. It was noted that no such initiatives had been undertaken by the EMB during the period under review. However, ZEC had made an undertaking to implement this approach [18]

CIVIC AWARENESS AND VOTER EDUCATION:

While CVE should address the needs of all sectors, information needs of: 'young adults', 'students (in secondary and higher education)', and 'first-time' voters must be prioritized. The EMB had made an intimation that it would undertake a sustained process of addressing this through having such education being incorporated into the curriculum of tertiary and other learning institutions to cater for young persons.

PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION OF YOUNG PERSONS:

The recommendation was that Zimbabwe should consider introducing a youth quota for the 18–35 age group in local government and National Assembly elections. It is noted that Constitutional Amendment Number 2 had the effect of introducing such a quota system, although there may be reservations on whether it provides for substantial and effective participation and representation of the youth.

SUFFRAGE IN RELATION TO YOUTH:

In relation to the age of eligibility to stand for public office the recommendation had been that the authorities should consider setting the age for office at Local Authority, National Assembly and Senate Elections as the same as the age of eligibility to vote (18 years), in keeping with best practice in other Southern African countries. No changes in this regard took place during the period under review.

Election Administration and Age for Eligibility to Stand for Office:

	There were no changes during the period under review
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Voter Registration and Civic Awareness:

	There have been pronounced undertakings to address these matters by the EMB, which will continue to be monitored [18]
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Participation and Representation of Youth:

	Constitutional Amendment Number 2 Act introduced a youth quota for the National Assembly and Provincial Councils.
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5.1 THE MEDIA AND ELECTIONS

STATE OF THE MEDIA ANALYSIS

CHANGES TO MEDIA LAW:

It appeared that during the period under review the media law and policy reforms remained in limbo. A number of EOMs reports had envisaged changes to the media legal framework to enhance the electoral environment.

One of the pieces of legislation that has been cited by a number of EOMs as requiring urgent attention was the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA). It was believed to have created a constrained media environment, while giving the government too much power that could be abused. In July 2020, the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act was repealed and replaced by the Freedom of Information Act (FIA) [11].

In April 2021, the Zimbabwe Media Commission Act was promulgated [12]. This is part of the regulatory laws that govern the media. The Media Commission regulates the media, and therefore has an influence during a significant part of the electoral cycle in Zimbabwe. The Act gives legal effect to the operations of the Zimbabwe Media Commission. The privacy component of AIPPA was moved to the Cybersecurity and Data Protection Bill which during the period under review was pending before Parliament [13].

It was noted that the government was not clear and decisive on its reform agenda. While it had through its pronouncements created the impression that it sought to break with the media legal regime of the previous dispensation, there has also been a tendency to revive some of the objectionable legal principles, in this case through cybersecurity and data protection laws.

BROADCASTING LICENSES:

The Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) awarded six television broadcasting licenses following public interviews held in October 2020. This is the first time that the country has licensed commercial television stations. The same authority licensed community radio stations in December 2020[14]. While the decision to license more television stations is a welcome development, what stood out was the lack of diversity in the granting of the TV licenses. The new TV license holders either already hold print or broadcasting licenses or are linked to the government, while others are perceived to be linked to the governing party. With this scenario, the country risks having a homogeneity of news and views, which is anathema to democracy.

If Zimbabwe is to have a truly diverse media, there is a need for more players from different backgrounds to be granted licenses [15]. Though the government is rolling out new licenses, it is of grave concern that this has resulted in a plurality of players with very little in terms of diversity. A number of the licenses have been awarded to state-owned or linked institutions. One of the observations by diverse EOMs to Zimbabwe elections has been the apparent bias towards government by government owned or linked media houses on electoral reportage, and the need for inclusivity for other electoral stakeholders.

There was a drop in the number of journalists and media workers' violations during the period under review year compared to 2020. In the same period in 2020[16], MISA Zimbabwe recorded 32 cases of assaults, violations and attacks on the media, while in 2021 the organization recorded 11 cases.

There were no changes to the ZEC media monitoring legal framework informed by experiences of several previous elections. This is despite the regulatory powers conferred on ZEC with respect to the media during election periods [17].

" Scoring"

	Some movement was observed during the period under review The registrations of new players and the legal changes underway signaled some movement
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6.1 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

While the report notes that there was some movement in some areas, the general impression gained by an assessment of the electoral playing field is one of stagnation.

The failure to conduct by-elections represents one of the most serious failures to abide by the Constitution and its legal framework, under the guise of seeking to uphold the health of citizens. Many countries in Africa and beyond have successfully held by-elections and general elections under pandemic conditions with measures put in place to avoid the spread of the pandemic. Zimbabwe is advised to uphold its electoral laws.

Many of the recommendations that were made by well-meaning international and local election observer missions remain unattended to. Yet Zimbabwe is barely two years away from another set of harmonized elections. The tradition of rushed electoral law changes on the eve of elections is not in the best interest of a maturing democracy.

Many of the issues raised in the ZESN petition to Parliament remain outstanding. And yet these issues, if addressed, would contribute to a more credible electoral process.

Overall, ZESN noted that there is a general stagnation noted during the period under review. However the Network will continue to pursue electoral reforms as part of strengthening democratic processes in Zimbabwe and therefore offers the following recommendations:

On the Framework for the conduct of polls

The Government and Parliament are urged to continue to review the framework for the conduct of polls in line with the electoral cycle approach to elections.

On Legal developments

- While there has been an extension of the women's quota, it is recommended that a more sustainable formula for the genuine inclusion of women be adopted;
- There is need for ongoing review of the legal framework for elections to ensure consistency with the letter and spirit of the 2013 Constitution, as well as best practices and international and regional benchmarks; and
- There is a need to enhance civil and political rights in the context of the COVID-19 regulatory framework.

On Women's political participation;

- It is recommended that a more sustainable framework for women's participation in elections, and their representation be adopted in line with the spirit of the 2013 Constitution, which embraces gender parity; and
- Provisions for gender parity in political parties must be backed by enforceable legal provisions.

On Youths' political participation

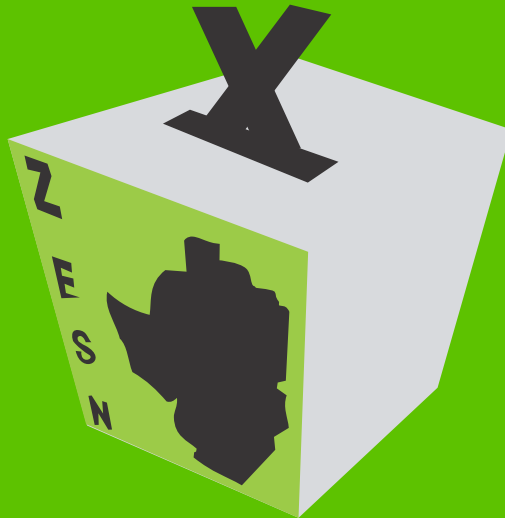
- Where it is not hamstrung by the law, ZEC must enhance its administrative systems to embrace young people;
- ZEC must enhance access to voter education throughout the electoral cycle; and
- The setting of fees for electoral contestants must be made affordable for young persons.

On Media and Elections

- Government of Zimbabwe must expedite media law and policy reforms that are guided by regional and international best practices
- Government of Zimbabwe must stop enacting claw-back laws that erodes the gains made through progressive laws such as the Freedom of Information Act (FIA).
- Government's efforts towards the regulation of the internet must be guided by the African Commission on Human and People's Rights' revised Declaration of Principles of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression, which guarantee the internet as a human right.
- The Government of Zimbabwe must guarantee the safety and security of Journalists and media workers at all times.

END NOTES

- [1] This is an executive institution set up in 2015 to coordinate efforts towards realignment of statutes to the Constitution of Zimbabwe adopted in May 2013.
- [2] That is, the parliaments arising from elections held, or to be held in 2013, 2018, 2023 and 2028
- [3] These changes were introduced into section 124 of the Constitution by Constitutional Amendment Number 2
- [4] Section 17 of the Constitution enjoins the State to achieve gender balance
- [5] See amendments to sections 268 and 277 of the Constitution
- [6] Section 3(2) grants Zimbabweans general adult suffrage as the basis for elections
- [7] See the case of Hilton Chironga and Another v Minister of Justice and Others, CCZ 14/2020
- [8] See sections 17 and 80 of the Constitution
- [9] See above under Legal Developments
- [10] In 2018 261 which translates to 13% women were elected in local government seats
- [11] See the AIPPA scrapped... New Freedom of Information Bill signed into Law
<https://www.herald.co.zw/aippa-scrapped-new-freedom-of-information-bill-signed-into-law/>
- [12] MISA Zimbabwe – ZMC Act now law <https://allafrica.com/stories/202104230568.html>
- [13] Cybersecurity & Data Protection Bill recommitted in Senate
<https://zimbabwe.misa.org/2021/07/31/cyber-bill-recommitted-in-senate/>
- [14] Licensing of New Community Radio Stations step in the right direction
<https://zimbabwe.misa.org/2020/12/18/licensing-of-community-radio-stations-step-in-the-right-direction/>
- [15] BAZ speaks on the new licenses
<https://zimbabwe.misa.org/2021/02/18/broadcasting-authority-speaks-on-newly-licensed-television-stations/>
- [16] MISA Mid-term report 2020_
<https://zimbabwe.misa.org/2020/07/31/mid-term-state-of-the-media-report-2020-now-available/>
- [17] The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (Media Coverage of Elections) Regulations, S.I. 33 of 2008 appear outdated and ineffective
- [18] <https://www.herald.co.zw/zec-to-incorporate-voter-education-in-tertiary-curricula/>



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