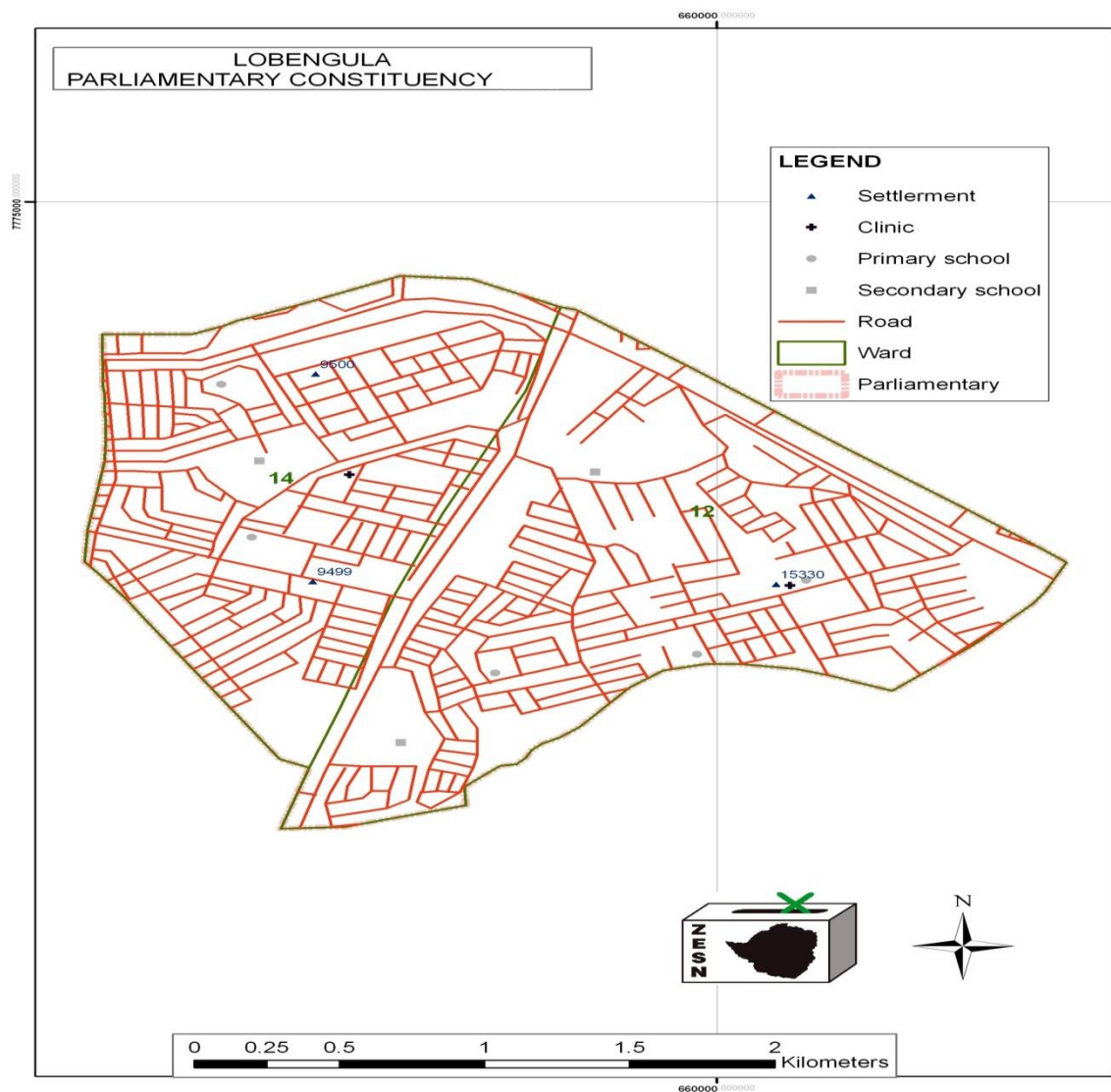


Zimbabwe Election Support Network



CONSTITUENCY PROFILE

Lobengula Constituency



1.0 Introduction

Lobengula constituency is a suburb of Bulawayo, the second biggest city in Zimbabwe. It is made up of high density suburbs of Njube, Old Lobengula, New Lobengula and Lobengula West. The Red Cross Centre is situated in this constituency. Unemployment has exacerbated poverty and most households lack housing tenure.

Poverty and unemployment levels are high in the constituency. People derive their sources of livelihood from the sale of basic goods on the informal market, vegetable stalls, cross border trading and back yard saloons. “*Operation Murambatsvina*” (Operation Remove Filth) left the many traders without livelihood. Increase in the incidence of poverty that can be associated with unemployment, no salaries, poor living conditions caused by closure of industries in the city are likely to influence voting patterns. Residents have in the past aligned their faith with opposition political parties for change but service delivery remained unchanged.

Bulawayo province has 12 National Assembly and 6 Senatorial constituencies. Ward 12 and 14 of Bulawayo Municipality make up the constituency. In the 2013 July 31 Harmonised Elections, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) allocated the province 392 polling stations and the constituency 27 polling stations.

1.1 Population Demographics

According to the ZimStat Census Report of 2012, the total population of the province was 653 337 in 2012 with 303 346 males and 349 991 females. Males constitute 46 percent and females 54 percent of the total population. The population in Bulawayo like that of Matabeleland North is generally young since the sizeable proportion of the population belongs to the younger age group (ZimStat Report 2012). The numbers of females generally exceed that of males for the ages 35-39 and 70-74.

The composition of the population by age group and sex is as follows: The 0–4 and 20–24 years age groups had the highest proportion of the population each (13 and 12 percent respectively) while the oldest age group (75 years and above) had the least proportion (about 1%). It can further be observed that the proportion of the young population that is those aged less than 15 years is 34% while that of the old population age 65 years and above is about 3%.

1.2 Previous Election Results

The constituency has been an MDC T stronghold since 2005. In both 2008 and 2013, the constituency was won by Nkomo Samuel Sipepa of the MDC T. The table below indicates the summary of the results from the 2008 and 2013 national elections.

	Candidate	Political party	Number of votes	Winning candidate
2013	Dube Christopher	ZANU PF	1 843	
	Dube Nhlanhla Mahlangene	MDC	1 113	
	Guvamombe Neria	ZANU NDONGA	83	
	Gwanda Valentine	FZC ¹	16	
	Jiyane Witness	AKE ²	24	
	Mathe Ndimande Albert	ZAPU	147	
	Nkomo Samuel Sipepa	MDC-T	5 580	Nkomo Samuel Sipepa
2008	Moyo Melika	UPP ³	132	
	Sibanda Alexis Nja Mackson	PUMA ⁴	96	
	Dube Christopher Mdingwa	ZANU PF	1 148	
	Masuku Dingilizwe	MDC	1 923	
	Nkomo Samuel Sipepa	MDC -T	3 850	Nkomo Samuel Sipepa

Source: www.zesn.org.zw

1.3 Background to the by-election

The Lobengula constituency by-election will be held on the 10th of June 2015. The seat fell vacant after the Member of Parliament Nkomo Samuel Sipepa was expelled from the MDC T after joining 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 by-election as 10

¹ FZC- Free Zimbabwe Congress

² AKE- Alliance Kumbul'Ekhaya

³ UPP- United People's Party

⁴ PUMA- The Patriotic Union Of Matabeleland

June and 16 April 2015 as the date for nomination court held in Court 5 at Tredgold building in Bulawayo.

1.4 Nomination and Contesting Parties

The nomination court was held on Thursday 16 April 2015 at the Tredgold Building in Bulawayo (Court 5). Main opposition political parties of the MDC formation withdrew from participating hence opening doors for independent candidates to take part. Njabuliso Mguni, who is the former MDC T MP for Lupane East Constituency in Matabeleland North successfully, submitted his papers with the nomination court as an independent candidate. Four other candidates will be representing political parties.

Below is the list of candidates who managed to go through the nomination court.

CANDIDATE	PARTY
Mbewe Jaine	Freedom Front Party
Sibanda Caspar	ZAPU
Mike Leonard Tawanda	TRANSFORM ZIMBABWE
Mpala Maideyi	ZANU PF
Njabuliso Mguni	Independent

1.5 Voter Registration and Registered Voters'

According to the ZEC 2013 Harmonised election report, there were 6 441 157 registered voters in the national register. Bulawayo province had a total of 320 598 registered voters in 2013, up from 313 459 in 2008 and 339 990 in 2005. In terms of the registration statistics Bulawayo is one of the provinces with the least number of registered voters nationwide. According to the ZEC Delimitation Report the constituency had 27 566 registered voters in 2008 and in 2013⁵, there were 25008 voters. The registered voters decreased by 2 558, a decrease of 9%.

Voter registration for the Constituency was conducted from the 22nd to the 28th of April. The ZEC established six mobile voter registration centres, of which three were located in ward 12 and the other three in ward 14. This is the third pilot voter registration

⁵ Note, the voters' roll being referred to is the 19 June 2013 register.

exercise which the ZEC is embarking on. The voter registration process included registration of first time voters and inspection.

1.6 Conclusion

In conclusion ZESN urges all contesting candidates and their parties in the by election to observe peace and tolerate divergent views. ZESN also calls upon the government to conclude the alignment of Electoral provisions to the Constitution, in particular voter registration.