

Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN)



Biometric Voter Registration Update Number 3

28 September 2017 – The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) continues to observe the Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) exercise at the 63 District centers established by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC). Observations made over the past seven days regarding this BVR process as detailed below:

Efficiency of the Registration Processes:

ZESN notes that there are improvements in some areas in the efficiency of registering voters as the ZEC registration officers become more accustomed to operating the BVR kits. In Mutare for instance, the time spent processing the registration of voters significantly declined as more ZEC officials were involved in the process. ZESN observed that as compared to last week, more registration officials were deployed specifically for handing out registration and affidavit forms to potential registrants and an assigned official signing affidavit forms. It was also noted that the presence of the District Elections Officer who is also involved in the training of voter registration and education officials, also contributed to the smooth running of the registration process. The presence of the Commissioner of Oaths at all times, at all registration centers is vital to help expedite the registration process.

In Harare, some registrants spent up to two hours waiting for the return of the Commissioner of Oaths and some returned home without registering to vote. ZESN calls upon ZEC to ensure that every registration centre has a permanent commissioner of oaths to assist citizens without proof of residence documents to avoid them being turned away. In addition, some centres are reported to have run out of Voter Registration VR1 forms resulting in scores of people being asked to submit themselves for registration on the following day.

Turnout:

ZESN notes that the turnout at most of the District centres where observers visited is generally low with the exception of the registration centre in Mbare Remembrance, Harare where significant queues continue to be observed with an average of 120 people being registered on a daily basis.

Statistics of registered voters

The ZEC has indicated that since the commencement of the BVR process more than 11 000 people have registered to vote countrywide. In the spirit of open data, ZESN urges ZEC to continue issuing periodic data on number of registered voters per Centre including information highlighting sex, age as well as information on number of persons with disabilities.

Technical Issues with BVR Kits:

Technical glitches of BVR Kits similar to those reported last week, were still reported in some Centers such as Kotwa where the BVR kit malfunctioned failing to capture fingerprints. This resulted in more than 10 people having to fill out forms stating that their biometrics could not be captured. There have been reports of kit malfunction in other areas such as Bulawayo as well as reports of an increase in the number of people whose fingerprints are unreadable due to rough skin and dry hands. ZESN urges the ZEC to publicize procedures outlining how incidents such as kit failure and malfunctions are to be dealt with including protocols for data backup for malfunctioning kits.

Voter Education for Voter Registration

ZESN notes that due to limited voter education on the process, significant numbers of potential registrants remain unaware of the process and some have had to go back home without registering for various reasons including not having adequate documentation. ZESN believes that comprehensive voter education must immediately commence before the nationwide blitz.

#usasarire #ungasalile #register2vote – REMEMBER, IF YOU DON'T REGISTER YOU CANT VOTE

PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

ZESN Chairperson: [+263772234891](tel:+263772234891)

ZESN Director: +263712415902

zesn2011@zesn.net, info@zesn.net

Facebook: Zimbabwe Election Support Network | **Twitter:** @ZESN1