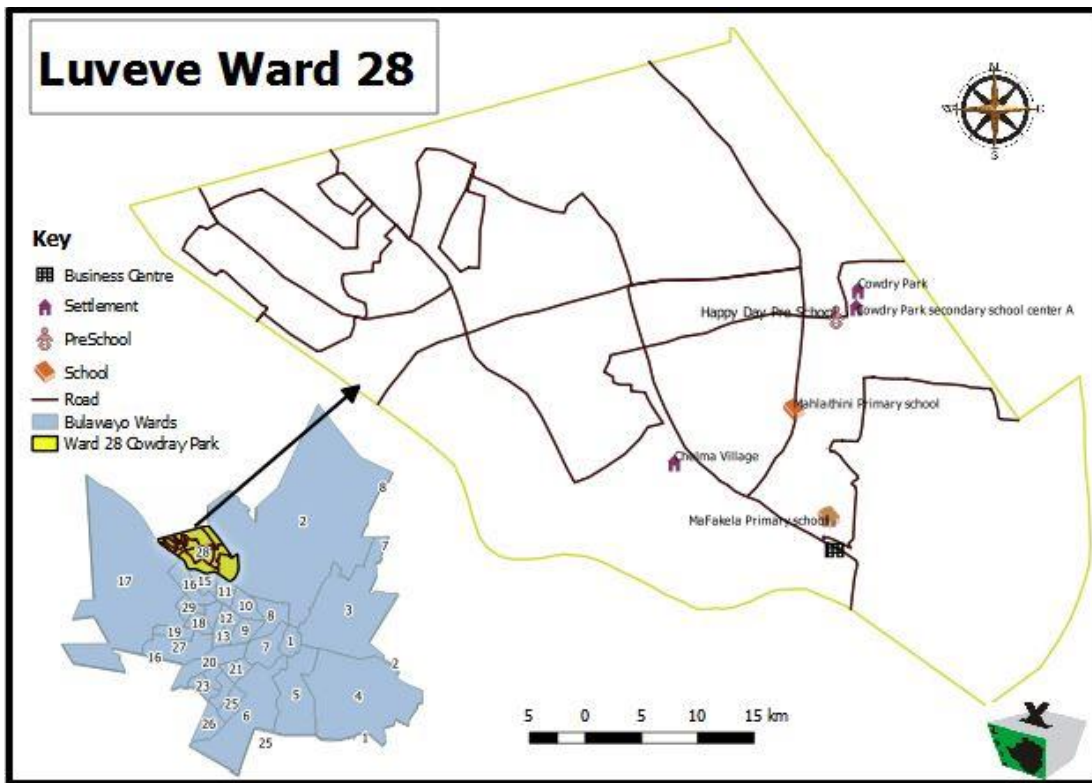


ZIMBABWE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK



COWDRAY PARK WARD 28 LOCAL AUTHORITY BY-ELECTIONS UPDATE



1. Introduction

Luveve Ward 28 commonly known as Cowdray Park is a relatively fast-growing high-density suburb that borders Nyamandlovu in the west, Norwood suburb in the north, Richmond to the east and Luveve-Emakhandeni to the south.

The ward has two secondary schools (Luveve Secondary and Tategulu Secondary), and four primary schools (Tategulu, Mkhithika Thebe, Mahlathini and Cowdray park). It has two major business centres (TM supermarket area and Terminus area).

2. Background to the By-election

On 30 March 2019, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) will conduct a local authority by-election for Cowdray Park (ward 28). Cowdray Park is in Bulawayo Municipality and is one of the three wards that make up Luveve Constituency, the other 2 wards being Gwabalanda (Ward 16) and Luveve (Ward 15). The ward has one of the largest voting populations of 23,3041. Accordingly, ZEC established 36 polling stations for the purposes of the by election to be held on 30 March 2019.

The Government Gazette of 8 February 2019 gave the dates for this by-election which will be conducted following the death of the incumbent Councillor; Hapson Ncube, who died in December last year.

Cowdray Park has historically generated significant interest from electoral contestants standing on either party tickets or as independent candidates. During the 2018 Elections 17 candidates contested the local authority elections for this ward. For this by-election the number of candidates has increased to 18 participants.

3. Nomination Court Results

The Nomination Court for aspiring candidates sat on February 22, 2019 in keeping with Section 125(4)(b) of the Electoral Act [Chapter 2:13] . Feedback from the ZESN observers who closely tracked the Court proceedings indicated that due processes were adhered to in the processing of the submissions by aspiring candidates.

¹ ZEC has not conducted a voter registration blitz for this by-election hence the number of person eligible to vote in this by-election remains the same as that of the 2018 Harmonised elections.

Below is a list of aspiring candidates who successfully lodged their nomination papers with the nomination court.

	Candidate	Sex	Date of Birth	Age	Political Parties
1.	Dube Enock	M	25/10/1952	66	Independent
2.	Dube Mejury	F	03/01/1976	43	UDA
3.	Gumpo Florah	F	08/08/ 1962	56	MDC T
4.	Mashayanyika Albert	M	20/04/ 1978	40	NCA
5.	Mloyi Nomagugu	F	02/1 1/1972	46	MDC A
6.	Mujuru Kidwell	M	28/1 1/1970	???	ZANU PF
7.	Mukucha George	M	24/11/1961	57	independent
8.	Mushauri Godfrey	M	20/06/ 1972	46	Independent
9.	Ncube Amon	M	14/07/ 1969	49	Independent
10.	Ncube Nkosinohando	F	28/07/ 1977	41	Independent
11.	Ncube Polite	F	11/1 2/1972	46	ZEFF
12.	Ndhlovu Collet	M	27/ 10/1962	56	M DC-A
13.	Ndlovu Nokuthula	F	05/08/ 1969	49	ZAPU
14.	Ngwenya Nicholas	M	26/07/ 1972	46	ZIPP
15.	Nkala Nkosentsha	M	01/12/ 1978	40	Independent
16.	Nyoni Nkosikona	M	10/01/ 1972	47	MRP
17.	Nzima Buhle	F	28/09/ 1982	36	NPF
18.	Tshabangu Stanley	M	01 /11/1965	53	Independent

Source: ZEC

4. Electoral Campaigns

For this by-election ZANU PF decided not to hold primary elections. Instead the party is fielding its losing candidate for the 2018 elections, Kidwell Mukuru. The MDC Alliance, on the other hand, held primary elections which were won by a former Councilor, Collet Ndhlovu. However the outcome of the primary elections was disputed resulting in more than one candidate from the same party filing their nomination papers with the Nomination Court. The party will therefore be represented by two candidates during this by-election; Collet Ndhlovu and Nomagugu Mloyi.

A total of 38 percent of the electoral contestants participated in the 2018 local authority elections for the same ward and will therefore be seeking to consolidate their various support bases thus raising the stakes in these elections. The campaigns have been reported to be peaceful so far, with posters and door to door campaigns reported as the most prominent modes of campaigning in use.

Below are some of the campaign posters that ZESN observers have come across in the ward.





ZANU PF is the only party that conducted a political rally in the ward. The rally was attended by top party officials who included secretary for administration Obert Mpfu, deputy national commissar Omega Hungwe, former ministers Mike Bimha and David Parirenyatwa the secretary for indigenisation and health respectively, politburo members Tshinga Dube, Absolom Sikhosana and Angeline Masuku and other top officials from the party’s commissariat department.

The rally which was addressed by the Country’s by Vice-President Kembo Mohadi who is reported to have donated 60 tonnes of maize and 30 tonnes of rice to Cowdray Park residents at a campaign rally.

5. Participation of Women and Youth in Elections

5.1. Youth’s Participation in Elections

The winning candidate in the 2018 harmonized elections for the Cowdray Park 2018 municipal elections was aged 34. It was reported that the MDC Alliance Youth Assembly members had requested that Ncube’s replacement be another youth. The request was denied. The two MDC-Alliance members that will contest the 2019 elections are 46 and 56 years old respectively. None of the 18 electoral contestants is

below the age of the 35 years with the average age of the contestants being 46.5 years of age.

5.2. Women's participation in the Cowdray Park by-election

Women comprise 38.8 percent of the 2018 (7 out of 18) electoral contestants. The results of the Nomination Court indicated that this number has remained static as the same number of women will be contesting the by-election. This number is at variance with the percentage of women who are currently registered to vote. During the Biometric Voter Registration 54.3% of persons who registered were women. Thus women significantly outnumbered men in the rates of registration.

6. Voter Education

ZEC's voter education exercise was conducted from 18-22 March 2019 by a team of four ZEC voter educators. A number of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are supporting the ZEC voter education efforts. ZESN for instance has a voter education team comprising four people that is interacting with residents in the ward as well as providing voter education materials. The ZESN voter education effort includes distribution of posters (1,700) and flyers (5,600) and radio jingles. The ZESN voter education team has also been addressing people gathered in public spaces such as churches and business centers. The Election Situation Room team distributed 300 voter education posters and 1,000 flyers.

The Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association in collaboration with Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD), Bulawayo Vendors and Traders Association (BVTA) and Victory Siyanqoba Trust are also conducting voter education activities which includes road shows and public meetings which allows residents to interact with all electoral contestants. The Consortium has deployed 20 voter educators. Some of the Consortium's activities have been conducted in partnership with ZESN as well. These include the meet the candidate

forums which were hosted over a period of two days and attended by over 500 people. All the 18 candidates participated in this event and Citizens of ward 28 had an opportunity to convey their service delivery expectations to the electoral contestants.

The pictures below illustrate some of the voter education efforts that are currently underway.



Figure 1: Flyers for a radio program that allows residents to interact with some of the women electoral contestants.



Figure 2: ZESN voter educators putting up voter education posters in the ward



Figure 3: ZESN voter educators addressing residents in the ward



Figure 4: part of the crowd attending the voter education roadshows conducted by a Consortium of CSOs.

7. Previous Election Results

Below are the results of the 2018 Cowdray Park local authority elections.

Name	Sex	Party	Votes
Dube Enock	M	Independent	254
Dube Mejury	F	UDA	291
Dube Sithandazile	F	ZIPP	385
Dube Williams	M	Independent	308
Gumbo Florah	F	MDC-T	1871
Mpala Mabel	F	APA	150
Mpofu Godsave	M	FJCZ	87
Mujuru Kidwell	M	ZANU PF	3632
Mushauri Godfrey	M	Independent	103
Ncube Nyasha Hapson	M	MDC-Alliance	8514
Ncube Rodney	M	MRP	439
Ndlovu Nokuthula	F	ZAPU	670
Nyathi Siphathisiwe	F	PRC	296
Nyoni Fikezweni	M	Independent	307
Nzima Buhle	F	NPF	219
Sibanda Khulekani	M	Independent	214
Tshabangu Stanley	M	Independent	426
Valid Votes Cast			18166
Votes Rejected			311
Total Votes Cast			18477
Voter Population			23304
Percentage Poll			79.29%

The fielding of two candidates by the party that won the previous election will likely result in the splitting of the votes for the same party. The prospects of such a phenomenon have further heightened the stakes for this by-election.

8. Conclusion

In keeping with its mission of promoting democratic elections in Zimbabwe, ZESN will closely track all the electoral processes that will be conducted by the ZEC as well as assessing the role played by electoral stakeholders during this local authority by-election. A comprehensive report with appropriate recommendations will be prepared thereafter.

and advocacy issues identified to support reforms in political, legislative and administrative spheres of election management.

**PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE
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