



Zambia Elections Information Centre

ZEIC

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ZEIC WEEKLY REPORT

25th June 2016 – 2nd July 2016



Report by
Zambia Elections Information Centre

INTRODUCTION

Elections are processes that have the following key components, campaign period, Election Day, ballot counting, announcement of results, declaring of the winners, and in some instances presentation of complaints regarding the election outcome. While we are mindful that there are no perfect conditions for holding an election, we believe that there are certain basic minimums that can be implemented to ensure that the election process is as conducive and ideal as possible. Hence the importance of acknowledging that an election process cannot be separated from the political and legal framework within which it functions.

For democracy to progress in Zambia especially during this election year, the grey areas and inequalities surrounding the election process so far must be highlighted and addressed. It is for this reason that the Zambia Elections Information Centre (ZEIC) has established several ICT based platforms that allow citizens to actively engage on the electoral process ahead of the 11th August tripartite elections. These platforms were designed with the understanding that the best way to create change in a society, is to connect the people that can make it happen and give them an opportunity to voice out on issues that matter most to them as a collective.

Our aim is to improve the quality of elections through sharing information at various stages of elections by addressing shortfalls so that a more informed and participatory citizenry is established ahead of the election. We also aim to engage with key stakeholders in efforts to resolve the challenges that may arise as the process unfolds in real time or near real time. Our key areas of focus as ZEIC on monitoring the following components of the election cycle are;

- 1. Media Monitoring**
- 2. Campaign Financing**
- 3. Citizen's views**
- 4. Election observation**

This report comes as a weekly collation of issues emerging from our citizen engagement platforms. The report vividly highlights what is happening across the country as experienced or witnessed by citizens and by observers deployed on the

ground by ZEIC and its partners. This information is verified, validated and analyzed by a qualified team of analysts for purposes of aggregating the data received.

In the past four weeks, the ZEIC teams have been on the ground monitoring the campaigns and key happenings as part of ensuring that our discussions are not only informative but interactive and authentic. In these four weeks, our Radio and TV shows have had expert representation from key stakeholders in the election process to address some of the emerging issues from citizens. As a platform, we are non-partisan and have not shared unverified information in our undertakings so far. We can continue to assure the citizens of Zambia that our reports are assessed by a team of qualified analysts who work round the clock to ensure that we remain credible and factual as a platform.

The last four weeks of active monitoring and engagement have brought to light many issues that indicate several grey areas and concerns that the Zambian electorate faces. This has thus prompted us to reflect on key issues emerging from the election period so far and efforts made in addressing them as well areas of consideration to enhance the process going forward. Issues highlighted so far are detailed below.

KEY ISSUES

- Timing and Content of the Referendum on Bill of Rights
- Election Campaign Violence
- Campaign messages
- The Role of Public Media
- The Role of the Church
- Quality of ECZ voter education facilitators
- Corruption
- Police Action
- Quality of Political Candidates
- Women's participation
- Tribalism
- Hate Speech

To expand on the above and establish more areas of concern from citizens, ZEIC posed the following question to encourage an interactive discussion.

‘With 11th August nearing, what in your view is missing in this election that would be of value?’ The question was supported by the hash tag **#MyIdealElection** on social media to gather different views on one page thread.

Our findings were that the areas of concern are centered around the same issues raised in past weeks which signals that more effort has to be undertaken to address these issues to the satisfaction of the citizens

Responses to the question cited that the following have to be addressed if an Ideal Election is to be achieved;

- ❖ A strongly perceived lack of readiness for the country to hold a national referendum
- ❖ Lack of comprehensive voter education on the content of the Referendum
- ❖ Dissatisfaction with content presidential candidates are giving out during campaigns.
- ❖ Lack of Presidential debates to engage citizens directly.
- ❖ Lack of issue based talks and policy checks.
- ❖ Escalating violence
- ❖ A need for peace and unity
- ❖ Need for Freedom of assembly
- ❖ Lack of equal media coverage
- ❖ Concentration on campaign songs and slogans as opposed to content at political rallies
- ❖ Enhancement of women’s participation in election process
- ❖ A more coordinated Civil Society
- ❖ Accountability and transparency from election mother body to inspire public confidence
- ❖ More action from management bodies such as the Police Service and Anti-Corruption Commission.

- ❖ Suspicion of vote rigging need to be managed
- ❖ Use of Public Resources

WHAT ZEIC HAS DONE ABOUT SOME KEY CONCERNS

In the build up to poll day, we have endeavored to provide platforms not only for citizens to voice out on issues they are passionate about, but also package this information for the attention of the various institutions tasked to ensure that the election process is administered accordingly. Some of the milestones thus far include;

- ❖ Raising awareness on the Referendum by providing soft copies of the Proposed Bill of Rights to citizens through our ICT and social media platforms. The Bill of Rights in its Draft form and the Referendum question have been shared with over 7000 citizens on our Facebook page while a collective from our WhatsApp Citizens Group and our Twitter Account (with over 2,500 followers) have been able to access a Bill of Rights copy via email.
- ❖ On a daily basis, ZEIC interacts with online users through Twitter and Facebook more extensively both within and outside Zambia who have questions and comments to make about the election process in Zambia. This has resulted in the platform being a central point of information and clarification on issues pertaining to the elections in Zambia.
- ❖ Our Media Crew has both interviewed and sensitized citizens on the Bill of Rights Referendum both in and outside Lusaka and aim to do more in other areas as the election process progresses.
- ❖ Our Radio and TV shows have featured several key individual persons representing key institutions who have spoken to the concerns of the citizens on a broader platform to amplify the voices of ordinary Zambians.
- ❖ In addressing concerns about corruption and the use of public resources during campaigns, ZEIC engaged the Anti-Corruption Commission and Transparency International Zambia who features on the ZEIC Sponsored show “Let the People Talk on Radio Phoenix to shade more light on issues

of corruption and sensitize citizens on what constitutes corruption and abuse of office.

- ❖ In addressing the information gap on the Bill of Rights, our Radio Shows have also featured among others, the Grand Coalition on Campaign for a People Driven Constitution, Mr. Vernon Mwaanga (Veteran politician) Mr. Roy Musankabantu (Veteran Politician) Mr. Reuben Lifuka (Governance Expert) to explain the process of a Referendum and shade more light on the Constitutional Reform process and the Bill of Rights.
- ❖ ZEIC has also opened the radio shows to citizens so that they are represented on the fora. So far, one citizen in the name of Mr. Kebbie Konnie has featured on our radio show to voice out on electoral issues from the perspective of citizens while countless others have been able to call in and express themselves unreservedly during the live radio shows.
- ❖ In efforts to enhance citizen's participation, The Tv shows on QTV and ZNBC respectively have had expert representation from the member of the ZEIC council of Elders, Father Leonard Chiti, TIZ Executive Director Mr. Goodwell Lungu, who have on behalf of ZEIC, explained how Citizens can use the ZEIC platforms to report on incidents surrounding the election process. The result has been a very interactive WhatsApp forum that highlights and debates issues on a daily basis. Part of which form our weekly content so as to amplify the voices of ordinary Zambians.
- ❖ To address the concern of biased Media Coverage, ZEIC engaged veteran Journalist and Media Practitioner Kellys Kaunda, MISA Zambia and Operation young vote representatives to shade more light to the public on what the role of the media in elections is and give a report of how the Media, both public and private have performed with regards their function to provide information to the public in a balanced, fair and professional manner.
- ❖ To address the issue of women's participation, Zambia National Women's Lobby as a stakeholder on the ZEIC platform has been able to give the public a detailed analysis of the state of women's participation in this year's general elections.

- ❖ ZEIC was also able to train over 10 political party representatives on how the ZEIC Platforms will work so that they are aware and encourage their members and supporters to send information to the platform for interventions to be effected.
- ❖ ZEIC, through the Council of elders has spoken to the issues of violence, women's participation and the role of the media through detailed and thorough press releases which have since been covered by public, private and online Media

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

The Zambia Elections Information Centre has established itself as an impartial source of information on elections in Zambia where public discourse has been enhanced and a more politically involved and active citizenry is being shaped ahead of elections. Our aim is to ensure that citizens, organizations, management bodies, observers and monitors all understand their role in the election process so as to create a more accessible and conducive political environment.

The key areas of consideration for us going forward are to.

- ❖ Engage the ECZ on how best the remaining time can be used to ensure that there is comprehensive understanding on the Referendum on the Bill of Rights as well as speak to the concerns of vote rigging.
- ❖ To establish means of effectively inspiring current presidential candidates to engage in a debates as per request from citizens.
- ❖ Address the numerous concerns on Violence by providing a platform for the police to engage directly with the citizens through radio and tv and inspire confidence as well as trust in the general public in the face of escalating violence and the need to provide a more free campaigning environment.
- ❖ To engage Church Mother bodies so that they educate the public on what their role is in elections and inspire confidence as most of our interactive followers have indicated losing confidence in churches and church leaders because they appear compromised and infiltrated by political agendas

- ❖ Monitor the conduct of candidates in this year’s elections for the attention of the general public
- ❖ Continue to stimulate public debate on key issues around the election process in Zambia by directly engaging ordinary Zambian citizens and connecting them directly to government, management bodies and Civil Society organizations through ICT based platforms, Social Media, Radio and TV.

TOPIC IDEA FOR CONSIDERATION

We would propose that the media discussions in coming week adopt the question “***what is missing in the election process so far that would be of value?***” This would inspire more public debate and engagement on what people wish to see in the election process and give immediate feedback since the shows are live on radio and TV. It may also help various stakeholders in the election process bridge the gaps that citizens are concerned about.

PANELISTS IDEA FOR CONSIDERATION

We would suggest that a former ECZ Commissioner features along with a citizen and a representative from ZEIC.

WEB AND SMS PLATFORMS USAGE

There have been a cumulative xxx SMS reports, xxx web reports to ZEIC platforms as of 02/07/2016.

No.	Platform	SMS Report	Web Report
1.	Citizens		
2.	Media		
3.	Observer		
4.	TIZ		

Twitter

No.	Platform	Details	Statistics	
1		Tweet impressions (number of times users saw the Tweet on Twitter)	52,900	7,200 impressions per day
2		Engagement rate(clicks, retweets,replies,follows and likes divided by total impressions)	1.8%	More engagement of 1.2% compared to prior week
3		Link clicks	27	Average 4 link clicks per day
4		Retweets (sharing of a post by other users)	198	Average 28 Retweets per day
5		Likes (affirmation/bookmark of content)	159	Average 23 Likes per day
6		Replies (responses to posts)	198	Average 28 replies per day

Facebook

No.	Platform	Details	Statistics	
1		Page Likes	7,925	5,044 new likes (2,881 last week) page views
2		Posts	353	671 Likes on posts 161 post reactions 18 comments 2 shares 6,949 people reached
3		Page impressions	6, 949 people reached	Audience age range between 25-34
4		Videos	87 video views	Audience mostly use mobile devices

Instagram

No.	Platform	Details	Statistics
1	Followers	235	Avg of 5 new followers per week
2	Posts for the week	3	
3	Likes per week	8	Avg of 3 likes per post

WhatsApp

No.	Platform	Details	Statistics
1	Violence cases: it has been noted that during the run up to the elections a number of reports on violence have been recorded.	Fourth week of June 2016	4-5 violence cases reported on a weekly basis around Zambia.
2	Media reporting and press freedom	Fourth week of June	Discussed at least 4 times
3	Bill of Rights and Referendum: Citizens of Zambia share concerns on the lack of knowledge and clarity on the BOF and Referendum.	Fourth week of June 2016	Discussed on platform at least 10-11 times

YouTube

No.	Platform	Details	Statistics
1	Subscribers	3	50% growth in subscribers over period
2	Videos	4	Total views 46