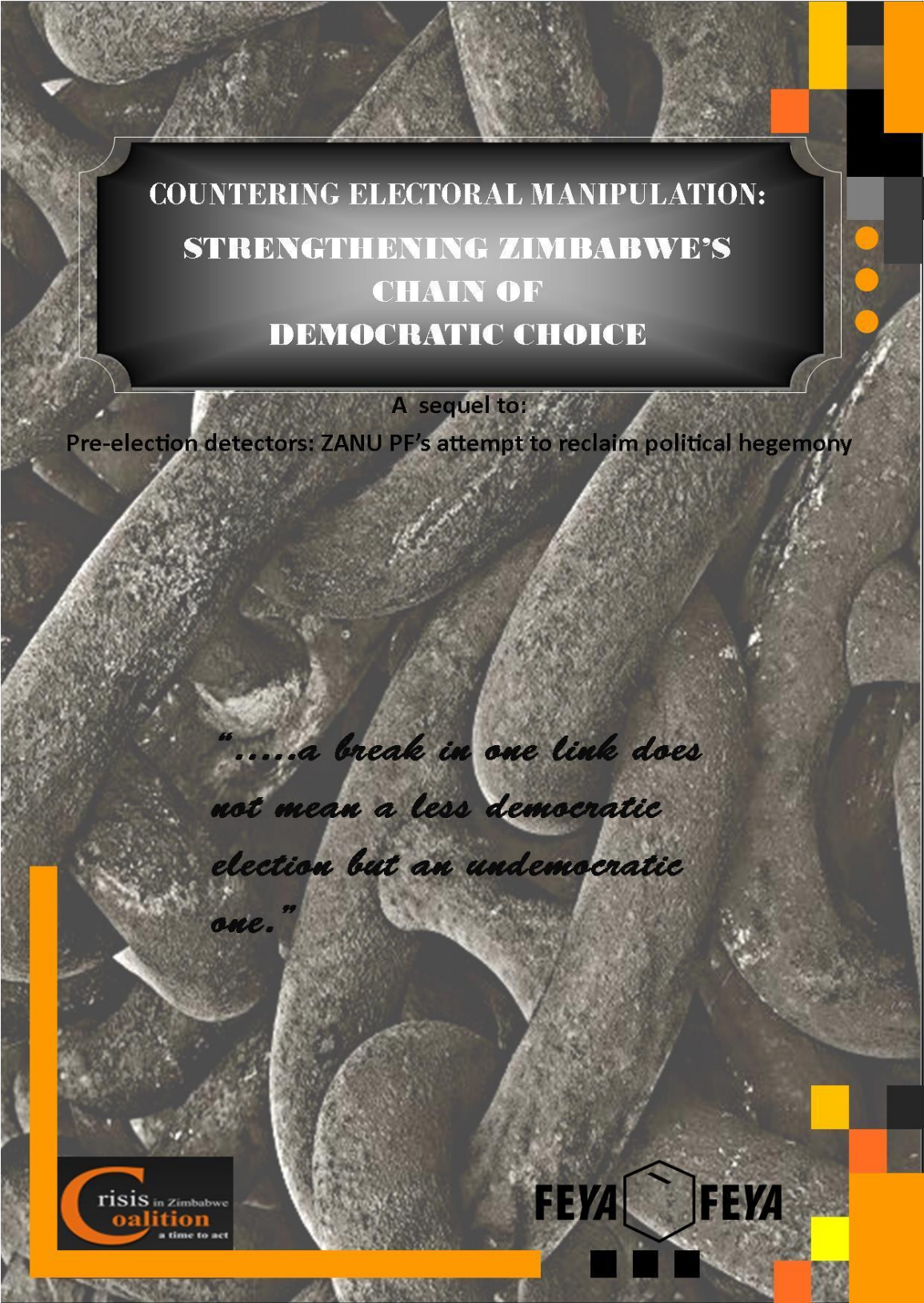




COUNTERING ELECTORAL MANIPULATION: STRENGTHENING ZIMBABWE'S CHAIN OF DEMOCRATIC CHOICE

A sequel to:
Pre-election detectors: ZANU PF's attempt to reclaim political hegemony

*".....a break in one link does
not mean a less democratic
election but an undemocratic
one."*

Crisis in Zimbabwe
coalition
a time to act

FEYA  FEYA
■ ■ ■

COUNTERING ELECTORAL MANIPULATION: STRENGTHENING ZIMBABWE'S CHAIN OF DEMOCRACY CHOICE

Head Office

18 Philips Avenue
Belgravia
Harare
+263-4-704418/+263-4-798038

S.A-Regional Office

711,7th Floor, Khotso House
62 Marshall Street
Marshall town, Johannesburg
+ 27-11-838736/+27-732120629



A Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition Production



Abstract

This paper is a sequel to our previous edition, *Pre-Electoral Detectors: ZANU PF's attempt to reclaim political hegemony*. In the previous report we argued that the Zimbabwean state exhibits tenets of a competitive electoral authoritarian regime. In terms of real empirics it was our submission that the ZANU PF ruling elite would prefer to shift from naked violence to more subtle ways of electoral manipulation. In this paper, we proffer context-specific interventions that can ensure Zimbabwe gets a free and fair election. This is premised on building a robust case for consensus on the five links that can build Zimbabwe's chain of democratic choice. These are information, inclusion, insulation, integrity and irreversibility as we explain in the paper. The consensus should be at a local, regional and international level emphasizing that a break in one link does not mean a less democratic election but an undemocratic one.

Acknowledgements

This paper was compiled with the aid of the tireless research and conceptual clarifications of Dr. P. Zamchiya and G.Chitanga (Phd Candidate Rhodes University). The Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition thanks them. It also thanks the internal review and editing team, which finalized the paper for release into the public domain.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Building Zimbabwe's chain of democratic choice (5 'I's).....	5
2.1. Information.....	5
2.2. Inclusion	5
2.3. Insulation	5
2.4 Integrity.....	5
2.5 Irreversibility	5
2.6 Figure 1: Zimbabwe's chain of democratic choice.....	5
3. Brief context: democracy& elections	6
4. Tracing the electoral cycle	8
4.1. Figure 2: The electoral cycle (the social, political and institutional framework of an electoral process)	8
5. Vote boosters, lenitive of terror & error	10
6. Conclusion	16

1. INTRODUCTION

In year 2000, it appeared near impossible that pro-democracy forces would be able to convince the Southern African Development Community (SADC) that the crisis in Zimbabwe was not just one of a post-colonial state, rooted in the neos of imperialism and colonialism. It took a lot of intellectually laced advocacy to move the key political players within SADC to appreciate that beyond ZANU PF's rhetoric was a very specific agenda to oppress the people. It was the issue of naked violence and repression that eventually made SADC to take a more pro-active role. Now the challenge that confronts Zimbabwe at this juncture is that ZANU PF is conscious that overt, systematic and naked violence will delegitimise its 'victory' in the next harmonized election. As we argued in our earlier report, political parties are not static. ZANU PF is attempting to abandon and/or minimize naked violence in order to reclaim its political legitimacy. What would it take to convince SADC again that the Zimbabwe crisis is not just about state sponsored violence but other modes of manipulating elections, economic governance, societal cohesion and institutional collapse?

However, given the scope of this paper we focus on a broad definition of electoral manipulation which goes beyond the electoral environment, the electoral process and balloting to include a deeper contextual analysis of the political system, prevailing political culture and the nature of the regime itself. This is in acknowledgement of the fact that recent scholarly work has sought to provide a nuanced distinction between fraud, malpractice (including criminal malpractice) and systemic manipulation. Hence in this report the term 'manipulation' is what will be broadly used in order to avoid confusion on the likely distinctions.

Our belief is that there is no substitute for rigorous evidence based advocacy on the democratization of Zimbabwe, both at home and in the region. The premise of it should be peaceful elections alone are not synonymous with democracy or with a solution to the Zimbabwe crisis. What is needed is to build a robust case on the need for a chain of democratic choice at least in relation to the upcoming watershed election. Regular and, moreso, peaceful elections are insufficient to fulfill the promise of a democratic choice in Zimbabwe. We follow the genealogy of Robert Dahl's wisdom to outline five primacy conditions that must exist for a free and fair election to happen in Zimbabwe. As Schedler (2006:40) argues, 'together these conditions form a metaphorical chain which, like a real chain, holds together only so long as each of its links remains whole and unbroken'.

The report is organized as follows: the first section provides an introduction which also captures our contextual definitions of electoral fraud and manipulation; the second section is a presentation of our conceptual framework premised on the chain of democratic choices; the third section provides a brief context of democracy and elections in Zimbabwe; the fourth section juxtaposes our conceptual framework with the electoral cycle and provides an insight based on hindsight on the likely rigging points; the fifth section is a discussion of strategies to detect, deter and mitigate fraud and manipulation in the coming elections and; the final section is a conclusion which reconciles our conceptual framework with the possible deterrent and mitigatory interventions as a way of concluding the report.

2. BUILDING ZIMBABWE'S CHAIN OF DEMOCRATIC CHOICE (5 'i's)

2.1. Information

Democratic elections entail **the free formation of voter preferences**. Citizens need to have access to alternative choices that is both to aspiring candidates and their policies. For this to happen there is need for citizens to have access to plural sources of information and there is also need for candidates to have equal access to the public space. Otherwise 'unless parties and candidates enjoy free and fair access to the public space, the will of the people as expressed at the ballot box will be little more than the echo of structurally induced ignorance' (Schedler 2006:40).

2.2. Inclusion

All citizens must have equal right to participation without any hindrances, legal or practical to universal suffrage. Violations of this norm might include the election and informal or practical hindrances such as difficult access to registration centers, demand for proof of residence and partisan registration *et cetera*.

2.3. Insulation

Once the citizens have formed their preferences and attained their right to participate in the election they must be able to express their choice freely. The use of the secret ballot is meant to insulate people from outside pressure, undue influence, intimidation, threats, coercion, bribery or even verbal disapprovals of their choice. Trends such as voter intimidation or harvest of fear violate this link and undue influence through patronage e.g. the use of material resources, food aid or minerals to win political support.

2.4 Integrity

Once citizens have voted their votes must be counted honestly and be weighed equally to uphold the principle of one-person one vote that was central during the liberation struggle. The professionalism, independence and competence of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), Registrar of Elections and related election management institutions should be at the center of this. This is meant to avoid the rigging of votes during counting characterized by inflation and deflation of votes and institutional bias in the management of the elections.

2.5 Irreversibility

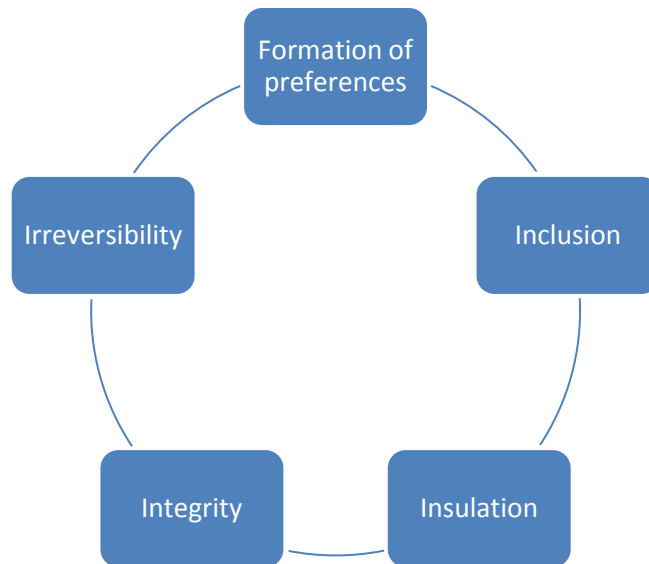
Winners must be able to take state power and exercise their power in line with the constitutional term limits. Hence an election must be decisive *ex ante* as well as irreversible *ex post*. Once this happens then Zimbabwe's chain of democratic choice closes. Norm violations can include stopping winners of the ballot from taking state power or allowing them to take power then frustrate their operations through tutelage or masterminding a coup before their constitutional right is over.

Of emphasis to the key election stakeholders that include government, ZEC, SADC and the international community is that partial compliance with the tenets of the democratic choice does not lead to partial or 'acceptable' democracy in Zimbabwe but it leads to undemocratic elections. Any violation to any of the links does not lead to 'acceptable' or 'credible polls' but to unacceptable and disputed polls. There is no room for half measured reforms. An electoral control game of breaking a rule ahead of the others compromises the credibility of the elections

and should be stopped. Violation of any of the conditions invalidates the fulfillment of all the others and the chain of democratic choice breaks down. We therefore argue that the chain of democratic choice cannot operate without any other link. The figure below demonstrates the chain.

2.6 Figure 1: Zimbabwe's chain of democratic choice

A violation of one link does not lead to a less democratic election but to an undemocratic election



Adapted by P. Zamchiya

3. BRIEF CONTEXT: DEMOCRACY& ELECTIONS

This paper will not delve much into scholarly definitions of democracy but will seek to clarify the ideal meaning of democracy and its mutual implications with elections. Although elections by themselves are not a sufficient condition for democracy, good quality elections are a necessary condition before we can speak of democratization and democracy¹. Thus for us to understand the character of electoral manipulation and propose practical interventions to protect the vote and ultimately the will of the people as expressed in electoral outcomes, we should appreciate the role of elections in a democracy.

Democracy ideally stems from the concept of the sovereignty of the people as expressed in the choice of their preferred leaders to govern them. Democracy is therefore realized to the extent that the public exercise control over decision making and decision makers in line with the core value of human self-determination and autonomy which allows them to enjoy their lives as citizens and not subjects². Accordingly free and fair elections have come to be the only widely accepted way to gain state power.

¹ J Elklit, Democracy and Elections in Africa in K Matlosa et al(eds), (2007) Challenges of Conflict, Democracy and Development in Africa, EISA

² D Beetham,(1999) , Democracy and Human Rights, Cambridge: Polity Press

Schumpeterian scholars have proposed an understanding of democracy based on elections as the only way to choose and remove leaders out of office.³ Such academics propose a definition of democracy based on a “procedural minimum” satisfying such key attributes as regular elections that are competitive, free and fair; full adult suffrage; broad protection of civil liberties, including freedom of speech, press, and association; and the absence of non-elected “tutelary” authorities (such as militaries, monarchies, or religious bodies) that limit elected officials’ effective power to govern. For the purposes of elections some scholars emphasize civil liberties and effective power to govern which are viewed as necessary for competitive elections to take place.⁴ Indeed some “tutelary” agents do seek to defeat electoral outcomes unfavourable to their cause as in Zimbabwe’s elections in 2008, when the military was argued to have taken over executive functions through the Joint operations Command (JOC)⁵. Incumbent regimes can impinge on the concept of uncertainty of election outcomes by fixing the results. Authoritarian electoral regimes rely on manipulating electoral systems to ensure favourable predictability of any electoral outcome, thus making for fixed electoral outcomes, which impinge the will of the people.⁶ Studies of Zimbabwe’s post-independence elections since the 1980s show that the ZANU PF regime has resorted to a complex recipe of electoral manipulation strategies and techniques as its domestic and international legitimacy eroded.⁷

Ideally, for elections to be considered democratic there must be transparency in the drawing and implementation of procedures that govern the conduct of such elections. Relevant institutions must be seen to autonomously uphold and enforce such rules and procedures.

Thus rules, regulations and procedures must be easily accessible, enforceable, be adhered to in the whole election process and be known to the contesting parties and individuals without exception.⁸ Given that agreement on these rules should be at the heart of the integrity of any elections they should not be tampered with or subjected to unnecessary changes without the consent of other contestants. Democratic elections should therefore take place within the confines of the constitution under an autonomous court of law and institutions that enjoy the confidence of the citizenry and the contesting parties. Democratic elections must also be conducted in a peaceful, secure and stable environment where individuals’ security is impartially protected. Those in charge of management of elections must demonstrate that they equally treat the contesting candidates and their supporters. Tolerance, indiscriminate access to mass media and participation of all registered voters should be guaranteed to ensure free and fair polls. From this clarification, we now turn to the electoral cycle.

³ L Diamond , *Developing Democracy, Towards Consolidation*, The John Hopkins University Press 1999, R A Dahl, *Poliarchy: Participation and Opposition*, Yale University Press 1971

⁴ D Collier and S Levitsky, “Democracy with Adjectives”: Conceptual Research in Comparative Research, University of Notre Dame, 1996

⁵ The JOC was comprised of Military, Intelligence, Police and Prisons Chief, as well as the Minister of Defense and the President.

⁶ A Schedler ,Op cit

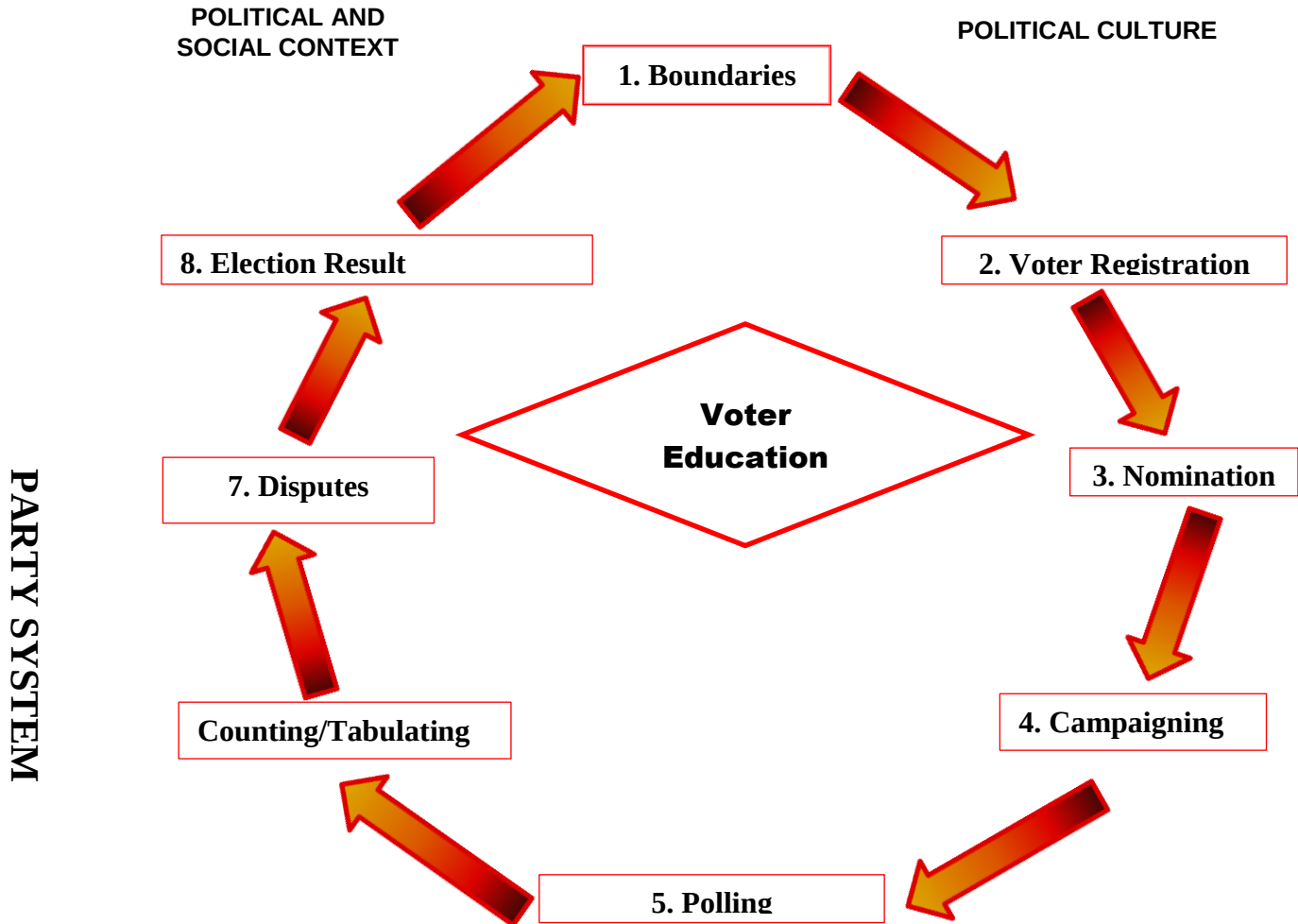
⁷ L Ploch, *Zimbabwe: 2008 Elections and US Policy*, Paper Prepared for Members and Committees of Congress, 26 September 2008. J Makumbe and D Compagnon (2000) *Behind the Smokescreen: The politics of Zimbabwe’s 1995 General Elections*, University of Zimbabwe. A Schedler, *The Menu of Electoral Fraud*, *Journal of Democracy*, 13(2), 36-50

⁸ J Elklit, Op cit

4. TRACING THE ELECTORAL CYCLE

It is important to have an understanding of the electoral process as manipulation can happen at different stages of the process. So there is need to pay attention to stages of the process as indicated in Figure 2.

4.1. Figure 2: The electoral cycle (the social, political and institutional framework of an electoral process)

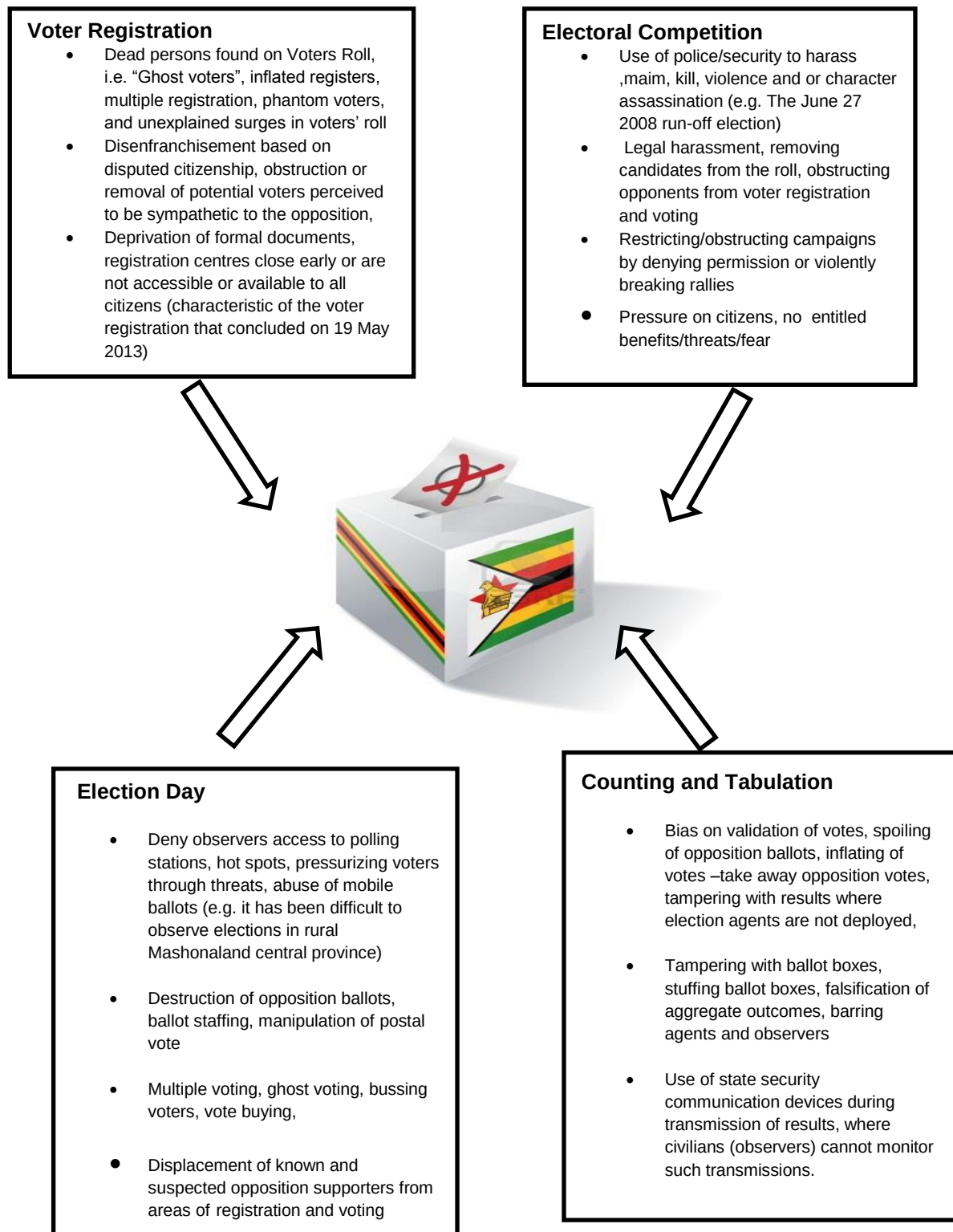


While conceding that electoral manipulation rests on the subversion of the electoral cycle (Fig 2), the definition of electoral manipulation should go beyond the electoral environment, the electoral process and balloting to include a deeper contextual analysis of the political system, prevailing political culture and the nature of the regime itself. In line with this view, we argue that electoral manipulation takes a panoply of forms both long and short term ranging from explicit and or subtle procedural violations of electoral law to the outright use of violence against voters and candidates.⁹ While the process view provides great insights on election management and administration and has provided the basis for various election observation tool-kits, it does not show the actual practices that emanate from the nature of the state and the national political

⁹ F Lehouq, Electoral Fraud: Causes, Types and Consequences, Annual Review of Political Science, v6, 233-256, June 2003

system. On figure 3 we illustrate with a few examples some forms of electoral rigging common in Zimbabwe.

Figure 3: Examples of practical election rigging based on previous elections in Zimbabwe.



While, the manipulation activities are not exhaustive, the table illustrates how at each stage of the electoral process the incumbent regime has manipulated political institutions and actors to fraudulently advance its goals in stealing victory from its opposition. This has happened in Zimbabwe in almost all the elections according to Kriger (2005) and was more overt in the June 27 2008 election (Masunungure 2008). The detailed examples on Zimbabwe are substantiated in our earlier paper: **Pre-Election Detectors: ZANU PF's attempt to reclaim political hegemony?** Indeed such a process is more complex and involves interplay of various elections rigging mechanisms sequenced in various covert and overt ways. This has subverted the will of the people in a manner that allows the incumbent regime to retain state power. The question is how to mitigate this complex chain of electoral manipulation? The next section attempts to provide possible answers to this question.

5. VOTE BOOSTERS, LENITIVE OF TERROR & ERROR

It could have been more ideal to simply categorize the recommendations in terms of the 5 'i's we identified. However, in practice the issues are so interconnected, a strategy to enhance access to information might have an impact on improving the integrity of the vote or insulating the community from intimidation and build the basis for irreversibility. The recommendations we offer therefore should be understood as a chain. A chain, that holds together only so long as each of its links remains whole and unbroken. This forms the basis of our argument that a break in one link does not make Zimbabwe's election less democratic but undemocratic. We now offer possible remedies, conscious of our guiding 5 'i's.

To enhance the logical flow of our argument, we have organized our suggested remedies under the following overarching headings: civil society engagement with the election management process; voter mobilization & voter registration and; building community resilience through people-to-people approaches. These remedies will ensure that the 5 'i's of democratic choice remain intact through early detection and mitigation of electoral manipulation and possible fraud.

5.1 Civil society engagement with the election management process

Civil society, political parties and the media, as well as, regional and international actors have a key role to play in support of Electoral Management Bodies (EMB). This is especially with regards to the integrity of the manner in which the EMB exercises control of the electoral process, including transparency and efficiency in the exercise of their functions to meet the needs of the voting public. The following initiatives will contribute to the integrity of the broad electoral process:

- i. *Civil Society must have **A ready pool of 20, 000 local observers** for the next poll based on the logic of 2 observers per polling station. In addition CSO's must hedge themselves against risk through increasing the number of CSOs applying for accreditation as observers. In the previous election Zimbabwe had 9, 111 polling stations and 18, 222 observers could have been sufficient. We argue for a ready pool of 20, 000 observers because the Ministry of Justice is most likely to be late but swift in calling for observers. As happened in the previous election the Minister of Justice invited 11,000 observers but only managed to deploy 8,000 observers due to time and other constraints. In areas that are difficult to penetrate there is need to rely on grassroots based organizations with structures in these areas already. Civil society must also spread its risk because in the June 27 election, which is the worst-case scenario, the observers from ZESN were reduced to only 500. So more civil society organizations must independently apply for accreditation of observers to hedge the risks. However, there is need for civil society to standardize and adopt a template on what should be observed, and ensure effective Coordination of the same, irrespective of wherein CSO's observers are coming from. The*

above will also assist coordinated collation of information. Below is a guiding framework in terms of geographic distribution for planning purposes.

Table 1: Geographic distribution of election observers

Province	Number of Polling stations	Recommended CSOs observers
Bulawayo	239	478
Harare	792	1 584
Manicaland	1 144	2 288
Masvingo	1 213	2 426
Mat North	751	1 502
Mat South	638	1 276
Midlands	1 333	1 666
Mashonaland Central	1 040	2 080
Mashonaland East	1 202	2 404
Mashonaland West	1 138	2 276
Total	9 111	18, 222

- ii. *The above distribution also means civil society **must lobby for an additional polling stations in areas like Harare**, for the next elections, where there was clear evidence of spatial distribution of polling centres. In the Presidential election of 2002, 2008 harmonised election and the referendum it was evident that there was spatial distribution of polling stations in major urban centers. There were long queues of voters. For example, Epworth had long queues in the referendum because of population growth and displacements coupled with limited number of polling stations. This limits civic participation in democratic processes.*
- iii. ***Intensify the lobby for SADC to deploy early election observers and strengthen the system of local long-term observers.** Civil society should call for deployment of election observers 2 months ahead of elections and 1 month after the polling¹⁰. Alongside, civil society should call for the strengthening of the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC), to enable it to monitor and observe elections because elections are the end test. Early monitoring and observation can minimize electoral manipulation or at least influence other observer teams on a shorter-term period. For example, the South African government's observer team had concluded in its 2000 preliminary report that the elections were free and fair because of the peaceful environment in the last week of the poll. Due to early observation reports from civil society the free and fair part was substituted with credible. This put the South Africa report under scrutiny.*
- iv. *Civil society must advocate for non-partisan recruitment of polling officers. This is out of the realization that it is now a herculean task to push for the reconstitution of the ZEC secretariat, especially the exclusion of prominent people that were associated with manipulating elections whose outcomes have been contested since 2000. The process as such, has to be all-inclusive, including the possibilities of participation in the vetting process by CSOs and other political parties.*
- v. *There should be a lobby for a **code of ethics**, possibly enforceable at law, to bolster transparency and oversight on key actors involved with the electoral administration and management.*

¹⁰ This has been a standing lobby position for Zimbabwean CSO's, it is however likely to be impacted on by when elections will take place and the amount of lag time given to these bodies by the Proclamation of election dates.

- vi. *CSOs must continue to insist on the independence of ZEC as critical and its other functions , which include the execution of critical processes such as voter registration or election logistics by the Registrar-General's Office, the National Logistics Committee and the Observers Accreditation Committee (OAC). Currently, members of ZANU PF dominate the Observers Accreditation Committee (OAC). The committee is made up of the Chairperson of the Commission who chairs it, ZEC's deputy chairperson, offices of the President and Cabinet, one person nominated by the Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs, a person nominated by a Minister responsible for foreign affairs and a person nominated by the Minister responsible for immigration.¹¹ In reality, given the contemporary political dispensation, all key players in constituting the committee are ZANU PF officials. While this clearly demonstrates the convergence of legality and political manipulation, political actors should disentangle such a morass to render credibility and faith in electoral institutions and electoral outcomes.*
- vii. *CSOs must maintain a watchful eye on the rumored plans to field Border Gezi youth graduates¹² as election officers in the Registrar General's office, after they were unilaterally confirmed as members of the public service by ZANU PF through the Ministry of Youth and Empowerment. Section 19 of the Electoral Act allows them because they are members of the public service but a political case can be built with ZEC, Ministry of Home Affairs and SADC as to why partisan officials in the civil service should not be allowed to manage the election in the Registrar General's Office. The contestation around their tenure and partisan nature makes it difficult for them to deliver a democratic election as elections should not only be free and fair but should be seen to be free and fair.*
- viii. *Civil Society must continue to engage and negotiate with the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to accredit local NGOs to carry out voter education for purposes of mobilizing the voters to register to vote as a gap filling measure following the chaotic mobile voter registration and possibilities of short time lags between key electoral processes.*

5.2 Voter mobilization and Voter registration

Civil society has a key role to play in ensuring that there is a simple and functional voter registration procedure, which will encourage maximum voter participation, and promote the development of accurate and complete voter registries. Civil society should continue pursuing the following initiatives, which will ensure a high voter turnout on polling day:

- i. ***Promote and popularize the use of the affidavit*** as a substitute to the proof of residence as a requirement to register to vote. This follows the South African model in local government elections. The registered citizens must keep their registration slips.
- ii. ***Campaign for a fair geographic distribution of voter registration centers*** through a ward based system, to counter overconcentration in the four provinces arguably targeted by ZANU PF to win the presidential vote through possible manipulation.
- iii. *Opposition formations and civil society should deploy experts to study the voters' roll, verifying constituencies' voter demographics.* The voters' roll if not competently audited may be used to deflate or inflate votes in favour of the incumbent. *Civil society must demand the voters' roll as of November 2012 and the one after the closure of mobile registration.* There is need for transparency and accountability in voter registration, hence the public and all political parties should be provided with full information, satisfied with the poll register before elections can be held. Already the voters' roll, perennially at the centre of disputed elections is reportedly in the hands of the military working together with

¹¹ ZEC dismisses MDC-T calls to overhaul accreditation committee, The Herald 10 April 2013

¹² These are para-military youth militias who have been trained at Zanu PF manned youth caps since 2001

a dubious secretive, “suspect Israeli company” accused of manipulating previous elections in the region.¹³ Civil society must intensify efforts to ensure ZEC takes full custody of the voters’ roll.

- iv. *Parallel Voter Tabulation (PVT) is an essential tool that can reduce electoral manipulation but due to the scope of this paper, we shall not detail the methods of transmission. We recommend that civil society lobby the policy makers who are currently amending the electoral act not to criminalise parallel voter tabulation processes. The emergence of new technology has proved a huge challenge to authoritarian regimes when it comes to insulating themselves from public scrutiny. There is therefore need to equip activists with necessary skills to use new modern technologies to expose any violations to the five links to our chain of democratic choice (it is prudent that the activists are also educated on the 5 ‘7’s. Internet, cell phones and androids through integrated apps have immensely created information sharing opportunities that did not exist before.*
- v. *Increase the number of voters through a coordinated Register to Vote Campaign followed by a Get out the Vote Campaign (GOTV). This can be sharpened through geographical and demographic targeting as recommended below. Such a campaign would also Intensify and expand the campaign to urge First Time Voters (FTV) to vote, beyond the youths, as there are potential First Time Voters across different age spectrums. These are persuadable voters.*
- vi. *Attempts across the Civil Society and Political party divide should be made, which urge those who were historically referred to as aliens and disenfranchised to register to vote and exercise their right to vote. Again, these are persuadable voters too.*
- vii. *Deliberate Efforts to boost the Vote in urban areas.* This is premised on a Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) (2008:9) study that indicates that the rural-urban distribution of voters in 2008 was as tabulated below¹⁴.

Rural-urban distribution of voters as of 2008

Geographic distribution	Registered voters	Percent of registered voters
Urban	1,602,376	28.6
Rural	4,000,574	71.4
Total	5,611,950	100.0

- viii. *Creating alternative sources of information, to ensure formation of preferences, among the citizenry before the vote.* These include maximum utilization of the social media, independent radio stations like Studio 7, Zi-FM, Short Wave Radio Africa, and Voice of the People, while stations that are perceived to be partial can also be targeted through commercial advertisements. Though “criminalized”, the sourcing and distribution of short wave radios especially in rural areas, has in the past been a useful way of expanding the public sphere and assisting communities without access to information other than that coming from the state. Packaging and disseminating information through artistic portable means should also aid this process, *alongside a strategy to continuously lobby for media pluralisation and freedom, consistent with the new constitution.*

5.3 Building community resilience through people-to-people approaches

Civil society groups working with youths, food aid, humanitarian aid, economic development, land and agriculture and rural community development need to be capacitated to begin to monitor how their respective areas of jurisdiction may be prone to manipulation for political mileage ahead of elections.

¹³ ‘Voters’ roll in the hands of suspect Israeli Company, The Mail and Guardian 12-18 April 2013

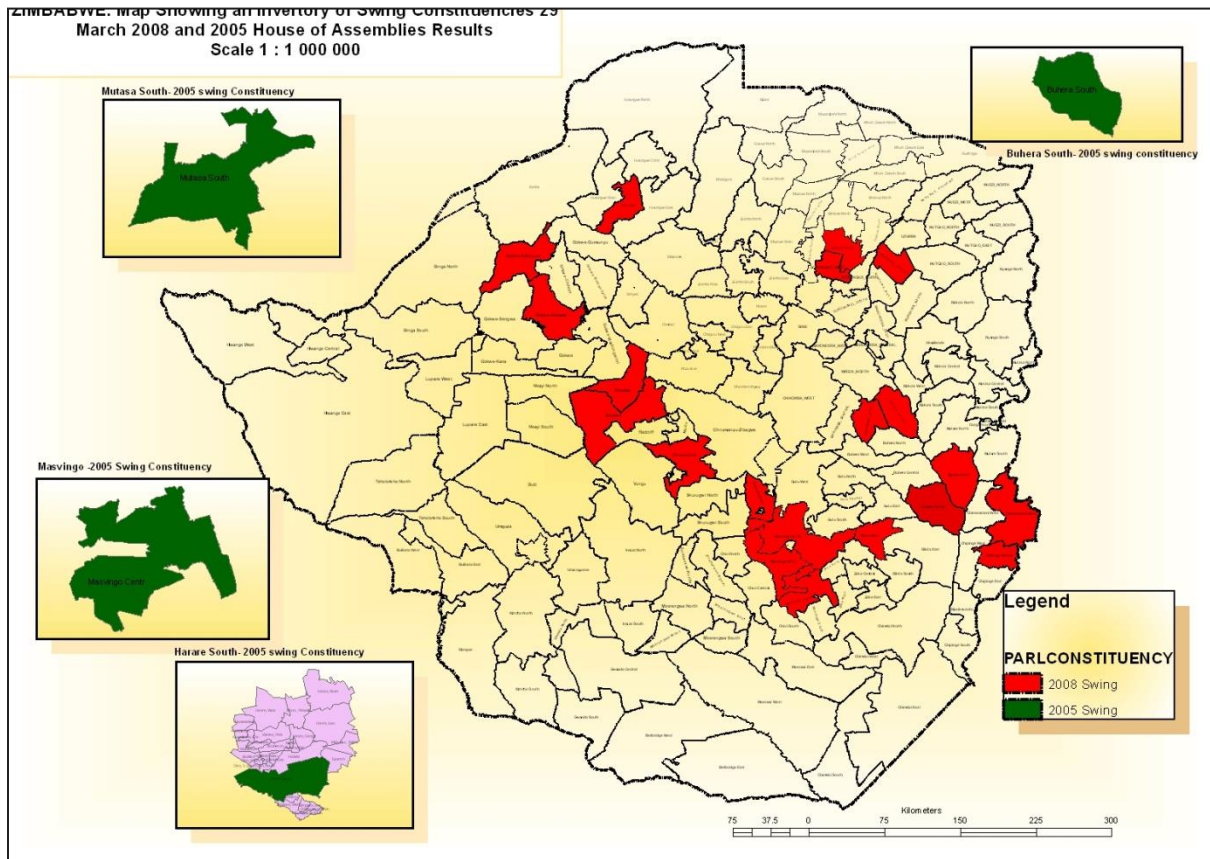
¹⁴ The figures will change depending on qualified definitions of what is rural and what is urban.

The following initiatives can be undertaken to ensure communities are able to respond to and mitigate violence and intimidation:

- i. *Build advocacy synergies in swing constituencies and Mashonaland provinces.*
 - a. *Carrying out periodic, credible opinion polls to gauge the electoral mood.*
 - b. *Establishing community protection mechanisms such as ward based peace committees in each of the constituencies.*
 - c. *Training special teams of monitors and observers for the swing constituencies and Mashonaland provinces so that they grasp in detail electoral technicalities.*
 - d. *Intensifying National healing and peace building programs in these areas.*
 - e. *Pre-election monitoring and documentation in the swing constituencies and Mashonaland provinces must be prioritized to place the areas under the microscope.*

The map below shows the constituencies. A more elaborate identification is in our previous edition: Pre-electoral detectors: ZANU PFs attempt to reclaim political hegemony.

Figure 4: Map showing swing constituencies based on March 29, 2008 election



- ii. *Production of systematic reports on voter intimidation incidents and campaigning for the disqualification of candidates involved especially in Mashonaland provinces and the Midlands province (as identified in pre-electoral detectors), which are submitted regularly to ZEC, JOMIC and the Facilitation team. This can be complemented by a specific campaign to seek the disqualification of individual candidates involved in voter intimidation, as informed by official observers as well as citizen reporting. Section 133A of the Electoral Act clearly defines intimidation as an electoral offence. The systematic reports need to be developed based on SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections and an election roadmap that SADC might develop with the political parties.*
- iii. *Expose the harvest of fear strategy so that communities are informed and able to respond tactfully. The above may include:*
 - a. *Strengthening peace committees across political parties in the identified politically volatile areas.*
 - b. *Encouraging the physical presence of observers in the volatile areas as it builds confidence in the communities.*
 - c. *Advising communities against overt resistance in volatile situations but to engage in more subtle covert means of resistance, which will be expressed through the ballot. This is meant to reduce the probability of violence through friction. See Alexander et al (2001) on how communities in Matabeleland in 2000 managed to outwit ZANU PF's authoritarian strategies through covert means of resistance and yet still voted for a party of their choice much to the surprise of ZANU PF.¹⁵*
 - d. *Coordinating and setting up rapid response contacts in each of the ten provinces of Zimbabwe, with a special focus on historically trouble areas, in the Mashonaland provinces and Midlands province.*
 - e. *Ensure that key community leaders and point persons have contacts for Human Rights lawyers, medical Doctors, counselors and journalists.*
- iv. *Civil society must urge the security sector and political actors to uphold section 208 of the Zimbabwe constitution, which exhorts Members of the security services to act in accordance with the Constitution and the law. It raises important tenets.*
 - a. *First, that neither the security services nor any of their members may, in the exercise of their functions—act in a partisan manner; further the interests of any political party or cause; prejudice the lawful interests of any political party or cause; or violate the fundamental rights and freedoms of any person.*
 - b. *Members of the security services must not be active members or office-bearers of any political party or organisation.*
- v. *In this regard civil society can urge SADC to assist by using the Defence Sub-Committee and the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation as forums to reach out to their Zimbabwean peers regarding the role of the security sector in democratic elections. In order to increase the cost of violation a code of conduct regulating the behaviour of the security sector during the elections must be emphasised in the election roadmap.*
- vi. *Lobby SADC to be clear on the fact that they will not legitimize any veto players who might seek to reverse the vote, as this may just be only the way to guarantee the irreversibility of the vote.*

¹⁵ Alexander J& McGregor J. *Elections, Land and the Politics of Opposition in Matabeleland*, *Journal of Agrarian change*, 1 (4), 510-533.

6. Conclusion

In summary there are practical ways of minimizing the effect of electoral manipulation strategies being engineered by what we have conceptualized as a competitive electoral authoritarian regime. There are practical ways to ensure that citizens have access to plural sources of information (*Information*); all citizens have equal right to participation without any hindrances, legal or practical to universal suffrage (*Inclusive*). Further lenitive to electoral manipulation would include ensuring that citizens are able to express their choice free (*Insulation*) and have their votes counted honestly and be weighed equally to uphold the principle of one person one vote (*Integrity*). The winners that emerge must be able to take state power and exercise their power in line with the constitutional term limits (*Irreversibility*). Hence an election must be decisive *ex ante* as well as irreversible *ex post*. This must be within the framework of building consensus locally, in the region and the world that violation of one link does not make the elections partially or less democratic but undemocratic leading to a flawed transition. Once this happens then Zimbabwe's chain of democratic choice closes.