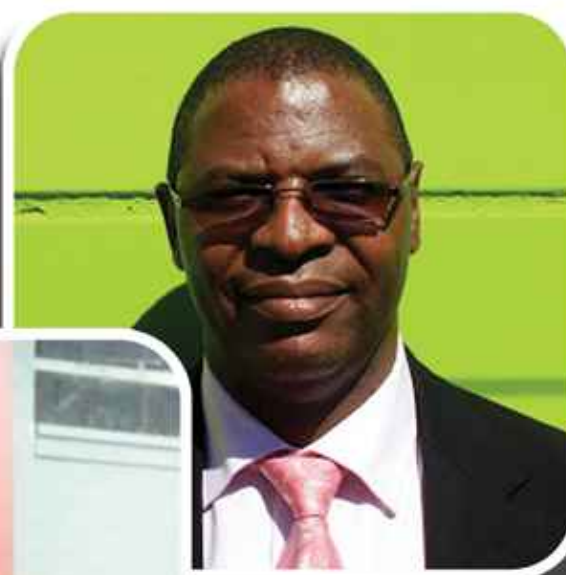
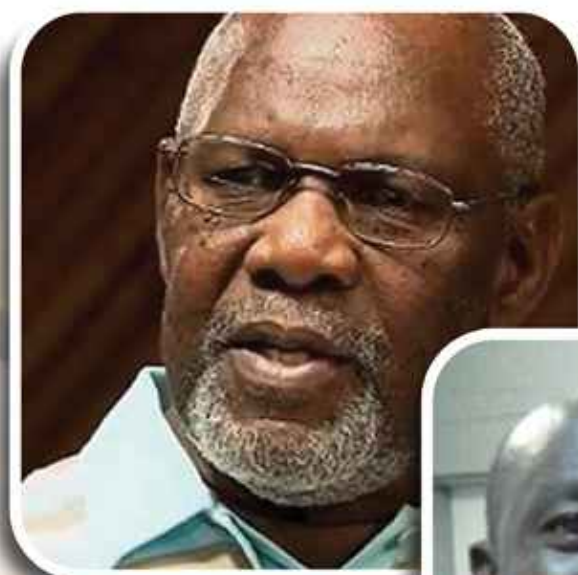


MEET YOUR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES



EDITOR'S NOTE

The Media Alliance of Zimbabwe (MAZ) and the Combined Harare Residents Association (CHRA) are engaging in activities under the Right to Information campaign with residents and resident's associations around the country. The organisations are cognisant of the importance of access to information to residents and in the election period, of the need to access information to ensure that citizens exercise their political rights. This newsletter is part of this broad campaign to ensure that ordinary citizens are able to access information related to the oncoming 2013 general elections. In a survey carried out by MAZ and CHRA, fundamental information gaps were identified with regards the oncoming elections. The gaps were related to the following five broad areas;

- How to register and Vote: For effective participation
- What parties, candidates and their proposals: So that they exercise their choices effectively
- How elections Work (electoral systems): So that the elections represent their will
- Levels of government they are voting for
- Zimbabwe Electoral Commission - For accountability and to ensure a credible election

A summary of the results of this survey will be published on page eight of this newsletter. In response to some of the issues that came out in this survey, MAZ and CHRA will be publishing an **"Elections Special"** on various election related information issues. The first issue will focus on the Presidential candidates, who they are, their political history, the vision and ideologies, their policies and contribution to nation building. It is fundamental that ordinary citizens have access to information on candidates, their political parties and the policies that make up their manifestos so that they are able to make informed choices on voting day.

The vote of ordinary people can have meaning and be effective if they have a wider choice of information. The Center for Law and Democracy notes that, "if voters do not know about the parties and candidates and their proposals and platforms, they will not be able to exercise their electoral choices effectively, and the results will not represent their free will". In that same vein it is important to note that citizens have a right to access information and that public bodies are obligated to provide the information despite the apparent gaps that we have observed, more so in a highly contested election like the 2013 General election which has aroused both local and international interest.

In pursuit of this ideal and following the confirmation of candidates by the nomination court MAZ and CHRA will publish the first issue focusing on President Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, Hon Minister Welshman Ncube, Mr Dumiso Dabengwa and Mr Kisnot Mukwazhi. We hope that you will enjoy this edition and we welcome ideas on what information you need as we approach the elections.



KISNOT MUKWAZHI

Kisnot Mukwazhi is the President of the Zimbabwe Development Party, (ZDP) and is the party's presidential contestant in the 31 July harmonized elections. ZDP was formed in February 2008 and fielded nine candidates in the Zimbabwean parliamentary election in 2008 but fared poorly, winning just 608 votes (0.03%). At the launch of the party in 2008, Mukwazhi said that he is a former member of ZANU PF in Masvingo province and praised ZANU-PF's policies and Robert Mugabe. Mukwazhi said that ZANU PF had good policies but blamed some corrupt ministers within the party of failing to implement the policies.

In an Interview with the Newsday, Mukwazhi outlined his election manifesto whose focus is around service delivery in Zimbabwe. Mukwazhi promises the

electorate that his party will address the water crisis within the first four months in power, provide land to people, develop growth points, and deal with corruption through introduction of a performance monitoring council to avoid instances such as what happened with the Constituency Development Fund. Mr. Mukwazhi claims to have approached Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai with a project called "One Zimbabwe" to have one candidate to oppose President Mugabe but says the PM's technical team scuttled the plans.

Though little known, Mukwazhi and his party appear regularly on ZBC television and radio stations. Apart from media conferences in Harare hotels, Mukwazhi has not held any political rally and says he will take his campaign to the social media.

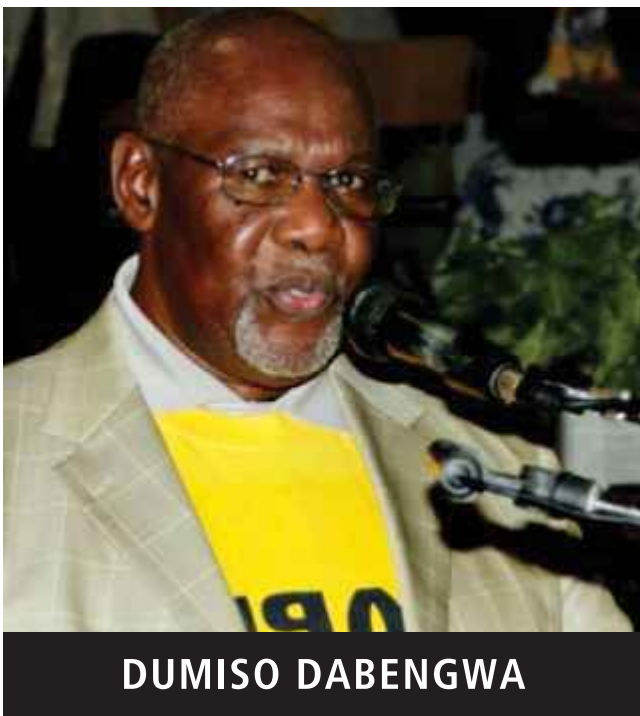
Dumiso Dabengwa is the Presidential candidate for the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). Dabengwa has been the ZAPU leader, since 2009 when ZAPU formally withdrew from the December 22 1987 Unity Accord with ZANU PF citing what it called persistent violation of the spirit of the accord by their ZANU colleagues. ZANU PF politicians have largely dismissed ZAPU's withdrawal from the unity accord saying Dabengwa has no right to withdraw ZAPU from the accord. ZAPU however remains a recognised party that will be participating in the 2013 election.

Dumiso Dabengwa was born on 6 December 1939 in Bubi District, Matabeleland North Province and grew up in Ntabazinduna. He attended Matshethseni School in Esigodini, Ingwenya Mission and Cyrene Mission near Figtree in Matabeleland South, Secondary School at Kutama Mission and Tegwane Mission. Dabengwa holds a Bachelor in Commerce degree from UNISA, a Diploma in Management and an Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree from the National University of Science and Technology (NUST).

Dabengwa is married to Zodwa nee Khumalo and has five children, 2 sons and 3 daughters.

POLITICAL HISTORY

Dabengwa, otherwise referred to as the "Back Russian" or "DD" has been a key player in Zimbabwean politics from 1958 when he joined the African National Congress of Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.



DUMISO DABENGWA

He later joined the National Democratic Party (NDP) Youth League following the banning of the ANC and ZAPU after the banning of the NDP.

DD received basic military training and military intelligence schooling in Russia between 1963 and 1965. He was later to head ZIPRA (the ZAPU military wing) Intelligence during the 2nd Chimurenga. It is claimed that Dabengwa was given the nickname "the Black Russian" by the Rhodesian Security forces because of his Russian training. In 1979 DD led the ZIPRA delegation to the Lancaster House talks. At independence in 1980, he represented ZIPRA in the Joint Military Command and retired from military service in 1981.

Arrested in 1982 and charged with treason, DD remained in prison even after a court found him not guilty, and later released in 1986 as part of unity talks between ZANU and ZAPU. In 1990 DD became Member of Parliament for Nkulumane in Bulawayo under a ZANU PF ticket and served as Minister of Home Affairs from 1992 – 2000.

POLITICAL VISION

The "Black Russian" is best known for his stance on devolution of power to the provinces. In a paper presented at Chatham House on 12 January 2011, DD is quoted as saying,

"ZAPU will remove the stranglehold of bureaucratic central government, and work for devolution of political

power and requisite economic responsibility to five viable provinces, i.e. Manicaland, Mashonaland, Masvingo, Midlands and Matabeleland."

In addition, DD states that ZAPU foresees "A state that respects, promotes and protects human rights without distinction of any kind" and "creates an environment that enables trade relations with the international community to normalise again. ZAPU will pursue policies that enhance economic development, industrialisation, private sector development, tourism, regional integration and foreign direct investment"

THE MAN...

"He is known to think fast and speak slowly and guardedly. He listens to so many people and confides in a few, leaving his mind and intentions a slippery subject of speculation and conjecture"

"Famous for wearing an expressionless face and speaking in a low deep voice that carries a mixture of melancholy and unmistakable courage, he is said to possess a photographic memory and volcanic temper yet, he is one of the few people who are known to smile and laugh when angry"

"It may not be wisdom to take him lightly or under estimate his capabilities and potentialities. He definitely has ingredients of personalities who are known to wrestle with the gods and seize history by the collar in the process listing their names among the children of destiny"

Dinizulu Mbikokayise Macaphulana in *"Dumiso Dabengwa's Barabas Dilemma"*

Trevor Maisiri, a political commentator with the International crisis group has spoken less glowingly of DD:

"DD has a very long history in this country looking at his liberation credentials, but I think the failure that we have at the moment is that he has miscalculated his political career, by having to go and resuscitate ZAPU... DD is somebody who would do well to work under any leadership except him being the leader of a political movement. So for him political miscalculation has been his biggest downfall"

Trevor Maisiri, interview with Violet Gonda on the Programme "Hot Seat" on SW Radio Africa



PROF. WELSHMAN NCUBE

“We must heed the call of our people and ensure that Devolution is a part of governance in Zimbabwe”

Professor Welshman Ncube was born on 7 July 1961 in the Midlands province. He is the current President of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), a position he took over from Professor Arthur Mutambara at the party congress in 2010. The MDC is the smaller of the two MDC formations that split in 2005 following a dispute over the party’s participation in the Senatorial elections, with Professor Ncube advocating for participation and Morgan Tsvangirai against. Professor Ncube was the founding Secretary General of the MDC, having been elected in August 1999.

Professor Ncube is the presidential candidate for the MDC in the 31 July elections. The MDC’s rallying cry in the elections is based on devolution which involves the autonomous decentralization of administrative, economic and political power to the provinces. Professor Ncube and his party want to realize a democratic Zimbabwe premised on the rule of law that will facilitate economic growth and create equal opportunities for all citizens.

PERSONAL HISTORY

Professor Ncube is a professor of law having attained that professorship at the tender age of 29 while teaching at the University of Zimbabwe. He has a Bachelor of Laws LLB and an MPhil (Law) degree from the University of Zimbabwe. His MPhil thesis was on Zimbabwean Customary Law focusing on Family Law, a field of law that he has widely published and is an expert on. He wrote several journal articles, books, legal opinions and through his legal practice with the Harare Law Chambers contributed hugely to law reports and legal jurisprudence on constitutionalism in Zimbabwe.

As an academic, Professor Ncube has been instrumental in providing key analyses of the political situation in Zimbabwe. He was at the forefront of unpacking and critiquing Constitutional Amendment Number 7 passed by the Zanu PF led Parliament in 1987 that brought about the executive presidency. Professor Ncube in legal opinions, public lectures and debates campaigned against state-sanctioned killings during the Midlands and Matabeleland massacres by the military in the 1980s.

Professor Welshman Ncube was one of the founding leaders of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) in 1997 that brought together a group including students, farmers, workers, labor and women’s groups. He was a member of the management committee of the NCA and national taskforce member that mobilized Zimbabweans to reject the Draft Constitution in a referendum in February 2000 arguing that President Mugabe had changed the draft law and imposed executive powers contrary to the people’s views.

PROFESSOR NCUBE IN POLITICS

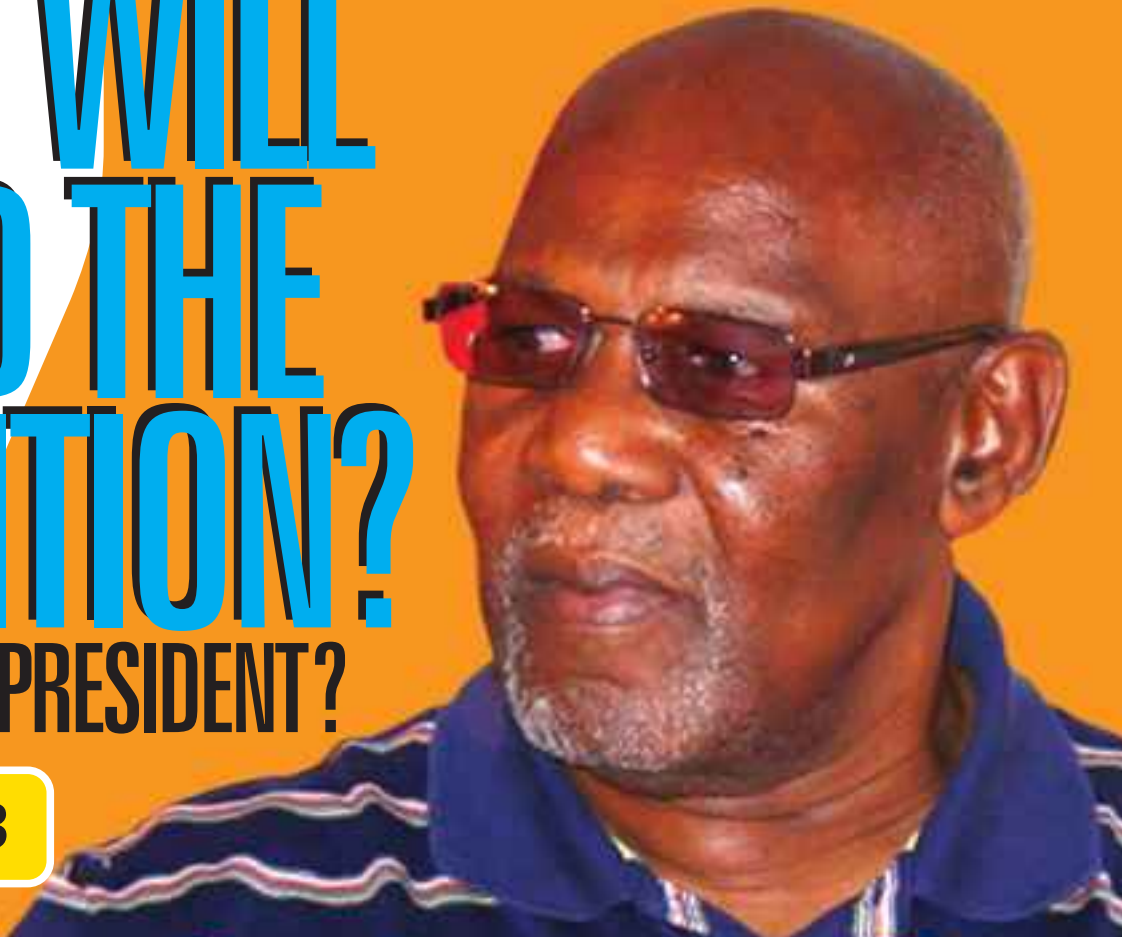
Professor Ncube was elected as a Member of the House of Assembly of Zimbabwe for Bulawayo North East in the 2000 elections and served in the House of Assembly until 2008. In 2002 Ncube was one of three MDC leaders together with Tsvangirai and the late Rensen Gasela to be charged with high treason over an alleged

plot to assassinate Robert Mugabe, but like the others was found not guilty.

Professor Ncube is the current Minister of Industry and Commerce since 2009 following the formation of the inclusive government which came into being after the signing of the Global Political Agreement in September 2008. Professor Ncube’s role in the Inclusive Government has been nothing short of interesting. His position as president of the MDC would have ideally entitled him to take over as a Principal in the Global Political Agreement. However President Mugabe has consistently refused to accept him as a principal, which has led to his exclusion from key decisions on many processes in the inclusive government despite heading one of the parties to the GPA.



**WHO WILL
LEAD THE
COALITION?
WHO WILL BE PRESIDENT?**





**DR RICHARD MORGAN
TSVANGIRAI**

“We just don’t want power for the sake of power, but we want to make poverty and joblessness a thing of the past”

Dr Morgan Tsvangirai is the President of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), Prime Minister of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and the MDC candidate in the 31 July elections. This is the third time that Tsvangirai is contesting in the Presidential election having lost a disputed poll in 2002 that was marred by massive political violence and the first round of the 2008 election where he won 47.8% of the votes against President Mugabe’s 43.2%. Tsvangirai pulled out of the second round of the 2008 election claiming that the political landscape was not conducive for a free and fair election.

PERSONAL HISTORY

Morgan Tsvangirai was born in Gutu on 10 March 1952 and turned 61 in 2013. Tsvangirai is married to Elizabeth Tsvangirai (nee Macheke), who he married in 2012. He was previously married to Susan Tsvangirai from 1978 – 2009 before she died in a horrific car accident. The couple have six children, Garikai, Vimbai, Edwin, Millicent, Rumbidzai and Vincent.

Tsvangirai has received several awards because of his ideals and commitment to democratic change. These awards include an honorary degree of Doctor



of Laws from Pai Chai University in South Korea and the Solidar Silver Rose Award.

LIFE IN POLITICS

Affectionately, known among his supporters as “Save”, Tsvangirai began his political career as a branch chairman of the Associated Mine workers Union and rose through the ranks to become a leading member of the executive of the National Mine Workers’ Union. Due to his early active role, he was later elected as the Secretary General of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) in 1988.

Morgan Tsvangirai is the founding president of the MDC, a party born out of the structures of the ZCTU in 1999, a position that he holds to date. The MDC was formed as a broad coalition of activists and professionals in response to the economic challenges the country was facing and under the realisation that a strong democratic movement was key to mitigate these challenges.

Tsvangirai was also the founding Chairperson of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) which led the country to win a “no” vote in the Constitutional referendum against the government led Constitutional Commission in 2000, under the leadership of Thoko Matshe. Together with other contemporary leaders like the late Gibson Sibanda, Welshman Ncube, Learnmore Jongwe, Priscilla Misihairambwi Mushonga the new movement launched perhaps the biggest opposition to Zanu Pf that had ruled Zimbabwe since 1980. The MDC went on to win 57 seats in the Parliamentary elections of 2000.

MDC IDEOLOGY AHEAD OF ELECTIONS

Tsvangirai leads the MDC in the election under an election manifesto that promises a comprehensive job creation plan, addressing the high levels of unemployment in Zimbabwe and underpinned by an economic revival plan. He focuses on introducing a new culture of democratic governance by reversing an endemic system of state centralism, conflation of the party and the state, corruption, impunity and a general dearth of the rule of law.

The MDC T manifesto launched on the 7th of July 2013, speaks to the party’s ideology, that the MDC is a social democratic party committed to serving all citizens through a transparent and accountable government respecting the rule of law, combating corruption, and promoting a modern, inclusive, and socially just economy. The manifesto is largely a summary of the MDC’s broad policy framework dubbed the Agenda for Real Transformation. The manifesto is based on several pillars including, economic revival, infrastructural development, rebuilding of social services, a new focus on good governance and security in its various facets. While these promises are reminiscent of all election campaigns, the experiment of the inclusive government is a clear lesson of Tsvangirai’s capacity to lead a nation out of the precipice of collapse considering the social, economic and political conditions of 2008

As the Prime Minister of the Republic of Zimbabwe Tsvangirai spearheaded the introduction of financial policies that have seen the rise of economic growth rates recorded in 2009 and 2010 and general economic stabilisation. Of note is the 100 days plan



launched in conjunction with his government partners under the Government of National Unity that also sought to reintroduce Zimbabwe into the community of nations through increased investment and tourism. However the architecture of the inclusive government, a formation of three parties with different ideological leanings has seen the MDC losing a little of its identity in the government and failing to achieve some of its promised objectives.

The participation of the MDC in the inclusive government has also admittedly opened a can of worms. Several MDC councilors and members of parliament have been expelled for corruption while some members of Tsvangirai's leadership have exuded a penchant for high life amidst poverty. The Prime Minister himself has also been accused of living lavishly at his Highlands home and double dipping in state coffers a charge he vehemently disputes. Earlier in 2012 Morgan Tsvangirai was romantically linked to several women, and he has been heavily criticized for this.



ROBERT GABRIEL MUGABE



Sometimes referred to as "Bob" or "Baba Chatunga", Robert Gabriel Mugabe is the first Secretary and President for the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the party's presidential candidate.

The mainstay of President Mugabe's manifesto is economic indigenisation, empowerment, peace, nationalism and employment creation. The gist of the manifesto is however lost in many themes and slogans. Mugabe continues to anchor his message in the liberation struggle and thus calls for patriotism and national sovereignty as major themes of his campaign manifesto. The manifesto goes further to introduce a new and surprising message of peace which is important as previous elections in Zimbabwe have been dogged by violence.

ZANU PF's ideology espoused in the First Secretary's personae and borrowed from his name: "Mugabeism" has been taken in different contexts to refer to the party's political and sometimes economic ideology. This ideology seeks to re-define economic empowerment, the uniquely ZANU-PF way, characterised by the land reform programme and indigenisation better known for promoting neo-patrimonialism, a system that rewards supporters of the party to the exclusion of everyone else. Terence Ranger however looks at "Mugabeism" as referring to "a version of the past – called by the regime and its publicists "patriotic history".

"Patriotic history" emphasises the division of the nation not only into races but also into "patriots" and "sell-outs" among the African population. It proclaims the need for authoritarian government in order to repress and punish the "traitors" who are often depicted as very numerous – most of the urban population, and large sections within the rural... (it) offers a highly selective, streamlined version of the anti-colonial struggle. It is a doctrine of "permanent revolution" leaping from Chimurenga to Chimurenga. It has no time for questions or alternatives. It is

a doctrine of violence because it sees itself as a doctrine of revolution"

It should however be acknowledged that from 1980 to the early years of the 1990's ZANU PF policies ensured that Zimbabwe experienced relative economic stability and increased access to basic services by the majority black population in areas such as health and education, which have unfortunately been completely undermined in the last decade of political instability.

PERSONAL HISTORY

Baba Chatunga's history is well known to the majority of Zimbabweans. The 21st February Movement has become an annual activity to commemorate Mugabe's birthday with 2013 marking his 89th birthday. Robert Mugabe was born on February 21 1924 in Matibiri village, Kutama, in Mashonaland West to parents Gabriel and Bona Mugabe. R.G is currently married to Grace Mugabe (nee Marufu) who he married in 1996. He was previously married to Sally Hayfron from 1987 – 1992 before she passed away. Baba Chatunga is father to Bona, Bellermine Chatunga, Robert Peter and Michael Nhamodzenyika (late).

POLITICAL HISTORY

Robert Mugabe's political history in Zimbabwe began with his membership of the National Democratic Party (NDP) from 1960 – 1961. Following the banning of the NDP, R.G. joined the Zimbabwe Africa People's Union (ZAPU) which was led by Joshua Nkomo, before leaving to join the breakaway Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) in 1963. ZANU and ZAPU were banned in 1964 and its leaders arrested, including Mugabe.

COUNTINUED TO PAGE 6...



In 1974 Bob was elected to lead ZANU while in prison before his release in 1975. ZANU and ZAPU engaged in the 2nd Chimurenga war from 1966 – 1979 before signing the Lancaster House agreement that led to the first democratic elections held in Zimbabwe in 1980.

R.G Mugabe led Zimbabwe as Prime Minister from Independence in 1980 to 1987 when he assumed the post of President, a post he has held to date. The history of Zimbabwe in the 33 years under President Mugabe has been characterised by proclamations of peace interspersed with periods of violence. In 1980, the new prime Minister preached peace with his inaugural address stating:

“Our new nation requires of every one of us to be a new man, with a new mind, a new heart and a new spirit. Our new mind must have a new vision and our new hearts a new love that spurns hate, and a new spirit that must unite and not divide...Democracy is never mob-rule. It is and should remain disciplined rule requiring compliance with the law and social rules”

These noble statements in 1980 were however followed in 1982 by the sacking of ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo from government where he was serving as Home Affairs Minister. During this time, the Fifth Brigade branch of the army was deployed to Midlands and Matabeleland under the operation known as Gukurahundi, where an estimated 20,000 civilians are reported to have died at the hands of government forces. In 1987, the Unity Accord was signed between ZANU and ZAPU to form ZANU-PF. The period from the late 90s to the new millennium saw Zimbabwe spiralling into an economic and political crisis with policies such as the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) and the land reform programme leading to a decline in Zimbabwe's economy and people's standard of living.

President RG Mugabe virtually led the Zimbabwe state without any major opposition since the signing of the Unity Accord in 1987. This scenario changed drastically, first with the formation of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) a broad coalition of Civic organisations fighting for constitutional reform. Secondly, the formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in



1999 signalled perhaps the greatest challenge to ZANU PF since independence. In 2008, President Mugabe for the first time received less votes in a presidential election against main opponent Morgan Tsvangirai. However a power sharing agreement following the Presidential run-off agreed to the presidency of Robert Mugabe, and he remains Zimbabwe's president to date.

THE MAN

Robert Mugabe manages to elicit extreme emotions that cover polar ends of the spectrum from extreme anger to extreme admiration. His deputy Joyce Mujuru in January 2013 was quoted as saying:

“People are wasting their time by opposing President Mugabe. It was prophesied way back in 1934, when he was only 10 years old, that he was going to lead this country.”

On the polar end of Deputy President Mujuru's assessment of her superior is Western criticism of Robert Mugabe, described succinctly by scholar Mahmood Mamdani:

“It is hard to think of a figure more reviled in the West than Robert Mugabe. Liberal and conservative commentators alike portray him as a brutal dictator,

and blame him for Zimbabwe's descent into hyperinflation and poverty. The seizure of white owned farms by his black supporters has been depicted as a form of thuggery, and as a cause for the country's declining production, as if these lands were doomed by black ownership...”

Terence Ranger notes that “Mahmood Mamdani is correct to stress that Robert Mugabe is not just a crazed dictator or a corrupt thug but that he promotes a programme and ideology that are attractive to many in Africa and some in Zimbabwe itself...Mamdani takes care to balance this by recognizing Mugabe's propensity for violence”

The anonymous facebook personality Amai Jukwa has described the paradox that is R.G in the following words:

“What he (Mugabe) has is irresistible charm. That cheerful, welcoming and agreeable demeanour, the way he holds your hand in both his hands for a deliberately prolonged moment and his tactful slow, quivering voice as that of a harmless aged statesman ready to make demands for past misdeeds works magic...Despite his cuddly exterior, Robert Mugabe is actually the father of all hard-liners”



WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON ELECTORAL ISSUES BY CITIZENS? - SURVEY RESULTS



The Combined Harare Resident's Association and the Media Alliance of Zimbabwe conducted a survey on whether people have information on elections in Zimbabwe as this gives an indication of whether citizens will be able to exercise informed free will in the upcoming elections. The sample population was drawn from Harare, Bulawayo, Kadoma, Masvingo, Mutare and Buhera and the sample was both urban and rural. The sample had a female bias however, with 220 women and 112 men taking part in the survey. While respondents in the survey indicated that they have information on election related issues, there were some worrying results noted with very low levels of information on critical issues. One of the most worrying observations noted by the survey was that there is no information, people speculate and when they speculate, it breeds discontent around the election result, even before the votes are cast.

RESULTS SUMMARY

ON VOTER REGISTRATION AND HOW TO VOTE

71% of the sample group indicated that they have adequate information voter registration and how to vote, however, when asked questions on specific issues, there were serious information gaps. For example, only 45% of the respondents indicated knowledge of how the voting system works, in terms of vote tabulation at the ward through to the national level. Female respondents in particular also indicated that they only knew which documents to carry upon arriving at the voter registration centre. There was a lot of speculation among those who had not registered as rumours were doing the rounds that a woman needed to carry her marriage certificate in order to vote and there was no clarity on how the introduced affidavits were supposed to work. No one had disabused the women of this belief therefore there was some confusion on what documentation was needed to register as a voter.

The survey was conducted from the 21st to the 23rd of June, just little over a month before elections and only 18% of respondents said they were clear on the specific election date. The reason for this was mainly because of the varied sources of information people had. Information was received from radio, newspapers, television and word of mouth. There were therefore a lot of opinions offered on the election date; therefore there was a lot of speculation around when the election was going to be held. ZEC's silence on the election date, which it eventually confirmed at a late stage, is worrying because the electoral commission is expected to be the only formal authoritative voice on electoral issues.

ELECTORAL SYSTEM (FIRST-PAST-THE-POST, PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION OR MIXED)

Only 57% of respondents indicated knowledge of the electoral system that Zimbabwe will adopt for the 31 July elections. The majority of respondents were clear on the system used in the past, best described by most respondents as *"ahwinha ahwinha"* or *"winner takes all"*. Few of the respondents were however able to articulate the mixed system proposed by the new Constitution, nor knew there was such a system in place. Only 37% knew that the new Constitution had introduced the mixed system. In addition to this, only 57% of the sample population knew the powers of the bodies they will be voting for. There was knowledge around the powers of the President, Parliament and Council but very few knew why we have a Senate or what the role of that Senate is.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

43% of the respondents indicated that they had knowledge of the political parties or candidates contesting in the upcoming elections. Although the number of political parties contesting in the elections was announced, few of the respondents knew how many these were. There was surprise that there were over 20 registered parties as the majority of respondents knew between 3 and 5 of the parties contesting in elections. On political party financing, only 11% of the respondents said they knew anything on political party financing, legislative provisions on this or why it is important to have information on this.

On candidates most participants would just say *"tongoziva wekwedu"* or *"we just know our own"*. It seems the tendency by parties is to present themselves to their supporters and little of the information on candidates or their proposals is given to people outside party supporters. The result is that voters indicate knowledge of their party and perhaps one or two others that make it into the news.

POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON ELECTIONS

Only 31% of the respondents indicated that they knew the provisions of the Constitution, electoral laws and regulations on elections. While 53% of the respondents could articulate their political rights as citizens, there was uncertainty on whether these rights were written down anywhere. Only 14% had knowledge of the voters' roll, were they could access it and how many people were on the roll.

KNOWLEDGE ON THE ZIMBABWE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

31% of the sample population indicated they had adequate knowledge on ZEC. While 61% said they knew about ZEC and what it does, only 15% said they know how to get in touch with ZEC, 15% know the organisational structure, 19% know the people running ZEC and only 6% have knowledge of ZEC budgets and expenditure. Who runs the election is important in determining its credibility and citizen's confidence that the body will run a credible election however ZEC remains a body that operates somewhere in the sky and citizens have very limited knowledge of the body entrusted to run the election. Pro-actively disclosing information on itself would go a long way in building trust of citizens in ZEC because it will be a direct reflection of its transparency and willingness to be accountable to the public in its actions.

KNOWLEDGE OF PAST ELECTIONS

66% of the respondents indicated that they have knowledge of the last election in 2008 in terms of election results. However there was still quite discontent among some of the respondents. A few of them went on to say *"hatizive kuti chii chakaitika asi toziva kuti takabirirwa"* or *"we may not know what happened but we know we were cheated"*.

CONCLUSION

The research revealed the paradox of an election management body regarded as the only formal authoritative body on election related information and yet, *"there are presently no established baseline standards, or even studies clearly identifying better practices, regarding the...(information management)...by these bodies"*. It remains up to the electoral commission to provide credible information to citizens. When citizens have no knowledge of how the systems work, how an individual vote will be tabulated, how to vote, who the candidates contesting elections are or knowledge of the body running elections, this is breeding ground for a disputed election because there will be limited public confidence in the election.

As a public body ZEC is mandated through the new Constitution, law and international human rights law to provide access to information under the principle that:

"Public bodies hold information not for themselves but as custodians of the public good and everyone has a right to access that information"

In a country with a history of disputed election results, great political tensions and where the election management body has lost public confidence a new approach to managing electoral information that includes accountability and promotes public confidence is critical.

“LIMITED ACCESS TO INFORMATION BY PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES” - SURVEY

The Centre for Disability and Development, with support from the Media Alliance of Zimbabwe conducted a research around how persons with disabilities access information on elections. The research noted that information has sometimes been made available to people living with disabilities through collaborations between the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission and organisations working with people living with disabilities.

However, information is still inaccessible to the majority of people with disabilities, because of the lack of a policy framework to ensure this happens, structural difficulties, unavailability of resources among other reasons. The study highlighted that information is still being made available in inaccessible formats. Key documents such as the Constitution were not translated into Braille for example and key institutions do not have sign language interpretation. The distances that people in wheelchairs have to travel to access information also limits the amount of information available.

A key recommendation from the study was to: Formulate and implement national policies, programmes and legislation to promote the full and equal access to information and participation of persons with disabilities at all levels of our society.

MAZ/CHRA SURVEY ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND ELECTIONS - SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

ELECTION ISSUE	%
Respondents were asked whether they have information on the following aspects of elections:	
How to vote	83%
How to register to vote	88%
When to register to vote	79%
What documents you need to carry to register as a voter	84%
The date of elections in Zimbabwe	18%
Where you will vote	59%
What documents you will need to vote	88%
Why it is important to cast your vote	90%
How does the voting system work (How is an individual vote tabulated?)	45%
What are the powers of the body you will vote for (President, Parliament, Council)	57%
What voting system do we use (e.g.First-past-the-post, Proportional representation, other)	36%
Which political parties are contesting in this election	51%
Do you have information on the political parties’ manifestos	41%
Who are the candidates you will be voting for	68%
Do you know how you can observe the process as a citizen	38%
How can you challenge the result of the election	19%
Do you know what your political rights are as a citizen	53%
Do you have any information on how many people are on the voters’ roll/ are registered to vote	14%
Do you have any information on the finances of any political party?	11%
Do you have information on the laws governing elections in Zimbabwe (The constitution?, Rules governing elections?,	30%
Do you have any information about the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission?	61%
What does ZEC do?	61%
What are the powers and duties of ZEC?	40%
What is the organisational structure of ZEC?	15%
Who are the people who run ZEC?	19%
Budgets and expenditure of ZEC	6%
How can you get in touch with or request information from ZEC?	15%
Do you have any information about the last election in 2008?	66%

ELECTION COUNT-DOWN – KEY ELECTION DATES

DATE	ELECTION ACTIVITY	SIGNIFICANCE
28 June 2013	Sitting of the Nomination Court	Candidates must ensure that they submit their names and forms for confirmation as candidates by the nomination court.
09 July 2013	Close of Voter registration	All citizens who want to register their names to vote in the 2013 general elections must ensure that they do so before midnight of the 9th of July 2013.
10 July 2013	Due date for applications to observe the special voting process	All citizens and groups who want to observe special voting process must lodge their applications with ZEC.
12 July 2013	Election of the Chiefs Council	ZEC to monitor this process. Election stakeholders are advised to take note of this date.
14-15 July 2013	Special Voting days	Those granted permission to vote on these days are advised to take note of this information. If they do not vote on the said days they lose their right vote in the election for this year. Citizens and accredited observers are also advised to take note of this day.
28 July 2013	Last date of the publication of the final list of polling stations.	Observers and citizens must check this list as there may be changes.
31 July 2013	Date of the 2013 General Election	All citizens must check the list of the voters roll as published by ZEC and ensure that they vote within their own ward.
02 August 2013	Special vote for election of the two representatives to Senate representing people living with disabilities	All associations representing people living with disabilities should take note as they will form the electoral college and ZEC will conduct the elections.
28 August 2013	In the event of no candidate getting 50% +1 vote the law provides for a presidential runoff at least 28 days after the election.	Political parties must prepare for this eventuality which is provided for in the law. Election observers must also plan for this eventuality.

THIS NEWSLETTER IS A COLLABORATION BETWEEN MAZ AND CHRA



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