



***CCMG calls on Electoral Commission of Zambia To Erect Temporal Ramps at Registration Centers to Enhance Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities***

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**For Immediate Release**

CCMG has observed the Electoral Commission of Zambia's (ECZ) Continuous Registration of Voters (CRV) since its commencement on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023, and in its monitoring findings for October 2023, CCMG applauds the ECZ Voter Registration Officers for extensively adhering to the voter registration procedures and for releasing detailed registration figures for October noting the registration of 4,251 voters, of whom just under half (2,058) were women. However, CCMG notes continued challenges with registration centres being accessible to people with disabilities and calls on the ECZ to ensure that all prospective registrants can easily access registration facilities.

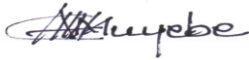
CCMG deployed monitors for Phase II of the CRV across the 20 District Registration Centers and has noted that all CCMG accredited monitors were allowed access to the registration centers to observe the registration process. CCMG notes that the Nchelenge registration center closed on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 ahead of the Kabuta ward by-elections in the district slated for 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023. CCMG's monitors noted that all registration centers observed had all the required materials, such as registration application forms, Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) Kits and laminates, and were also equipped with a backup BVR kit. Similarly, in all registration centers observed, all ECZ officials knew how to operate the BVR kits and the kits functioned optimally. CCMG also observed that applicants were requested to show proof of eligibility to register as voters by producing their NRC and, in the case of lost voter card replacements, ECZ officials also requested police reports related to the lost voter cards.

CCMG further applauds the recording of disability type for persons with disabilities, which will help the ECZ to enhance inclusivity in civic participation. However, CCMG noted that 53% of the registration centers observed had a step or stairs, making the centers inaccessible for persons using wheelchairs. In line with the High Court judgement in the case of *Sela Brotherton vs ECZ 2011/HP/0818*, CCMG calls on the ECZ to immediately take all necessary measures to ensure that temporal ramps are erected at all centers to enable accessibility for persons with disabilities. CCMG further urges the ECZ to provide registration data on persons with disability including gender, age and disability-type classifications. This information is important as it will enable the ECZ to effectively plan and implement measures on disability inclusion in the electoral process and also help civil society raise awareness on civic participation targeted at persons with disabilities.

CCMG notes that women made up less than half of registrants in October 2023, at 2,058 voters of the total 4,251 registered, representing 48% of registrants, a slight (3% increase) from the September period. Cumulatively, the number of women registrants still lags behind men across all age groups. Nearly half (1.872) of all registrants during this period were under 25, and CCMG encourages youth and first-time voters, women, and people with disabilities to take advantage of the CRV register to vote in their respective districts, and calls on the ECZ and all stakeholders, including political parties, to raise awareness of the CRV exercise.

Finally, CCMG commends the ECZ for the continued adherence to registration procedures and the release of disaggregated data periodically.

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