



CCMG Statement on Phase 3 and 4 of the 2025 Mobile Voter Registration Exercise

6 November 2025

For Immediate Release

Following the Electoral Commission of Zambia's (ECZ) conclusion of Phase 3 and 4 of the 2025 voter registration exercise, the Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) is pleased to share its observation findings from the two phases of mobile voter registration. CCMG assessed the voter registration process based on access to registration centres by accredited monitors/observers, opening of registration centres, setup, registration process and procedure, and closing processes. Furthermore, CCMG assessed the general political and electoral environment, focusing on voter education and publicity, as well as the participation and compliance of political parties and citizens with the Electoral Code of Conduct, and adherence to the voter registration regulations by the ECZ.

CCMG's sample included 167 registration centres in Phase 3 and 167 registration centres in Phase 4. Accreditation of observers remained challenging for CCMG in Phases 3 and 4, as detailed below.

Accreditation of Observers/Monitors

CCMG noted some marked improvements in accreditation of observers with 298 observers being fully accredited by the end of Phase 4, while 33 received some other form of authorization pending full accreditation, and 5 observers had not received accreditation or any form of authorization. According to CCMG's observer reports, failure to accredit observers is primarily due to dysfunctional accreditation kits and missing accreditation materials including forms. CCMG recommends that the ECZ adopts best practices on accreditation which include issuing accreditation certificates to accredited institutions and phasing out accreditation by individuals which has proved to be a challenge in the past electoral processes and in the current voter registration exercise. As accreditation continues to be a challenge during electoral processes, CCMG calls on the ECZ to engage with civil society to discuss recommendations and develop new guidelines well in advance of the 2026 general elections.

Registration Centre Opening

CCMG observers reported that an average of 11% of the registration centres remained closed and did not open in both phases (12% in Phase 3; 10% in Phase 4). This was primarily due to changes in deployment plans made at the district level, differing from the ECZ's national deployment plans published online. Additionally, 5% of registration centres did not open on time (after 08:30 hours), while a further 1% opened but later closed due to lack of backup power. CCMG urges the ECZ to align its district-level deployment plans with the national schedule published on its website to ensure that citizens can easily locate open registration centres in their areas.

Materials and Equipment

Observers reported that all essential registration materials were systematically available at the majority of registration centres, including BVR kits, laminates, and application forms. However, 51% of centres did not have backup kits, and in 5% of centres, kits malfunctioned, resulting in temporary suspension

Email: info@ccmgzambia.org Website: www.ccmgzambia.org

of voter registration. Despite these issues, this represented an improvement compared to Phases 1 and 2.

Access to Information

At 10% of registration centres, CCMG observers were not provided with voter registration statistics at the close of each day. ***CCMG reiterates that this lack of access to critical information about the process undermines transparency and accountability, contrary to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections.*** CCMG also notes, with grave concern, the ECZ directive instructing registration officers not to provide daily registration statistics to observers. CCMG acknowledges that registration figures at centres are provisional and remain subject to post-registration processes, including deduplication, inspection, and certification. However, providing such data allows observers to identify gaps and offer timely, evidence-based recommendations. CCMG therefore reiterates its call on the ECZ to share daily registration statistics with observers at registration centres, and to publish, in a regular manner, registration statistics by province, district and constituency.

Inclusion

CCMG observers reported adherence to the inclusion of special interest groups in the electoral process. At 98% of registration centres, officials recorded the type of disability of registrants with disabilities. At 94% of registration centres, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, and nursing mothers were allowed to go to the front of the queue. However, CCMG remains concerned that at 68% of the registration centres, people were required to use steps/stairs to access the registration desk. To this end, CCMG calls on the ECZ to enhance access to registration centres for persons with disabilities by providing ramps and making reasonable accommodations in line with Section 51 of the Persons with Disabilities Act.

Questionable Registrations

CCMG's observers reported limited instances of potential questionable registration or disenfranchisement. CCMG's observers reported that these issues affected a small number of people per registration centre and a small number of registration centres: at less than 1% of registration centres, officials turned away potential registrants who were already in the queue by closing time, 17hrs reportedly because the officials were tired and opted to close the centre; at 1% of registration centres, there was registration of applicants who appeared underage. CCMG's observers did not report any registration of applicants who appeared to be non-Zambians or incidents where those without National Registration Cards were permitted to register.

Presence of Stakeholders

Security personnel were present at 99% of registration centres. Political party agents were observed at low levels: UPND (3%), PF (2%), and other parties (3%). Observers from civil society and faith-based organizations were present at 7% of registration centres.

Voter Education

Voter information and education by ECZ's Voter Education Facilitators (VEFs) improved during Phases 3 and 4, with 94% and 96% of observers respectively reporting witnessing or hearing of such activities. Voter education by local media increased from 66% in Phase 3 to 96% in Phase 4, while civil society voter education efforts remained low, with only 2% of observers reporting witnessing or hearing of such activities.

Adherence to Procedures

CCMG's observers reported high levels of adherence to registration procedures. CCMG's observers reported that at all registration centres, ECZ officials appeared to know how to operate the voter registration kit: 100% reporting that applicants showed proof of eligibility, 100% reporting that successful applicants were given a voter's card with a photo, 100% reporting that registration materials were packed away safely at the end of the day, and 1% reporting registration centres closed before 17 hours.

Conclusion

In conclusion, CCMG commends the ECZ registration officers for their professionalism and adherence to registration procedures throughout Phases 3 and 4 of the mobile voter registration exercise. The improvements observed in voter education and materials availability are encouraging. However, persistent challenges; including inconsistent accreditation of observers, discrepancies between district and national deployment plans, closing centres despite registrants being in the queue at 17hrs, limited accessibility for persons with disabilities, and restricted access to registration data continue to undermine full transparency and inclusiveness.

CCMG urges the ECZ to strengthen its coordination with district structures to ensure uniform planning and communication, standardize accreditation procedures through institutional accreditation, and publish disaggregated registration data by province, district, and constituency. Additionally, CCMG calls for the timely release of daily registration statistics to all stakeholders to enhance transparency and confidence in the electoral process. Finally, CCMG encourages all eligible citizens to register to vote and participate actively in shaping Zambia's democratic future.

//ENDS\\



Peter Mwanangombe
Program Director

Contact Details

Peter Mwanangombe
Program Director
+260977545592

Nalishebo Saapi
Communication Officer
+260979302149