



## Long Term Pre-Election Observation Report No. 2

# RISING POLITICAL MOMENTUM:

An Assessment of Zambia's  
Pre-Election Environment Ahead  
of the 2026 General Elections

**Observation Brief**

*31 March to 27 April, 2026*



# I. Introduction

CCMG continues to implement its long-term election observation project ahead of the 13 August 2026 General Elections. This second reporting period, covering 31 March to 27 April 2026, builds on the baseline established during the first observation period and assesses how the pre-election environment is evolving as political activity intensifies ahead of nominations and the official campaign period.

During this period, CCMG observed increased political mobilisation, heightened intra-party competition, and continued stakeholder engagement on electoral reforms and nomination procedures. Key developments included the announcement of seventy (70) new constituencies, the introduction of the Electoral Process Bill No. 44 of 2026, and consultations between the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) and political parties on nomination processes. These developments coincided with intensified political party activities across the country, particularly around internal candidate selection processes.

The findings presented in this report are based on verified reports collected by CCMG's 330 Long-Term Observers (LTOs) across all constituencies, districts, and provinces. The report highlights emerging trends in the electoral environment, including political conduct, voter education, electoral administration, and compliance with the Electoral Code of Conduct, while assessing their implications for the credibility, inclusiveness, and peaceful conduct of the 2026 General Elections.

## **Key Areas of Focus During the Pre-Election Period**

During this second reporting period, CCMG's Long-Term Observers continued to monitor the application of the legal and regulatory framework governing elections, with particular attention to how these provisions were being implemented in practice as political activity intensified. This includes assessing the adequacy, consistency, and impartial enforcement of key laws such as the Constitution, the Electoral Process Act (EPA), the Electoral Code of Conduct, the Public Order Act (POA), the Cyber Security Act, and the Cyber Crimes Act, among others.

During this period, LTOs reported on key pre-election activities, including preparations for nominations, campaign mobilisation, and intra-party processes. CCMG's monitors also report on electoral administration and ECZ preparedness, including staff training carried out by the Commission, activities by the Zambia Police, and other stakeholders. Additional areas of focus include voter education/information and inclusion, the political environment and campaign conduct, the role of security agencies, and compliance with electoral laws. Observers monitor for inducements, intimidation, and other forms of electoral malpractice that may compromise the fairness and credibility

of the electoral process.

## II. Key Highlights and Trends

Based on reports from CCMG's observers across all constituencies, districts, and provinces covering the period 31 March-27 April 2026, and in comparison with findings from the previous reporting period (2-30 March 2026), CCMG observed the following key trends and developments (detailed below under III. Detailed Findings):

- 1. Electoral Code of Conduct Violations and Other Offences:** Less than one percent of CCMG observers reported incidents of politically motivated violence, with incidents recorded in Western, Lusaka, and Copperbelt Provinces. While this reflects a marginal decline from the previous reporting period, where 1% of observers reported similar incidents largely associated with Youth Day commemorations, the nature of the incidents observed during the current period points to a notable shift in the character of electoral tensions. Unlike the previous period, where most violence involved inter-party clashes between UPND and PF supporters, the current period was characterised predominantly by intra-party tensions and violence within the UPND arising from internal adoption and leadership contests ahead of nominations. This suggests that political competition is increasingly shifting inward as parties intensify candidate selection processes. CCMG further notes that incidents of intimidation are becoming more targeted and localised, including incidents involving threats, harassment, and symbolic acts intended to intimidate aspiring candidates and their supporters. The current reporting period also recorded incidents involving attacks on journalists and disruptions of media programming linked to intra-party disputes. Compared to the previous reporting period, where no attacks on journalists or media shutdowns were reported, this represents an increase in hostility toward media actors. Reports of the distribution of money, foodstuffs, and other goods as inducements for political support increased from 8% in the previous reporting period to 12% during the current period, indicating a widening prevalence of vote inducement practices across the country. The forms of inducements also appear to be expanding beyond traditional campaign materials and cash handouts to include livelihood-related items such as solar panels, water pumps, cement, iron sheets, sanitary kits, and computers. This suggests increasing use of material incentives tied to community welfare and economic vulnerability as political mobilisation tools. Similarly, the collection of NRC and voter card details remains persistent, though the number of related critical

incidents declined slightly from six (6) incidents in the previous reporting period to four (4) incidents in the current period. However, CCMG notes an emerging pattern linking the collection of voter details to access social and economic empowerment programmes, including cash-for-work initiatives and party mobilisation structures. This raises growing concerns regarding the misuse of personal voter information and the potential politicisation of public empowerment programmes.

- 2. Campaigning Outside of the Campaign Period and Other Practices to be Condemned:** Campaigning outside the official campaign period remained relatively unchanged, with 10% of observers reporting early campaigning by UPND and approximately 5% reporting similar activities by other parties and candidates. The persistence of premature campaigning across consecutive reporting periods suggests that early mobilisation has become entrenched despite existing regulatory provisions. Compared to the 2021 pre-election period, however, the scale of early campaigning remains relatively lower and concentrated among fewer political actors. There is a slight increase in the use of inflammatory, defamatory, or insulting language compared to the previous reporting period, including gender-based verbal attacks against a female candidate, highlighting concerns around violence against women in elections (VAWE). The use of military-style attire and regalia by political party supporters remained consistent at approximately 2% of observer reports across both reporting periods. However, CCMG notes that in the current period, there were additional reports involving youths armed with tasers, wearing ski masks, and participating in confrontational political activities, indicating a potentially more aggressive dimension to political mobilisation among some youth groups. Compared to the 2021 pre-election period, where higher levels of early campaigning were recorded across multiple parties (PF 18%, UPND 12%, and others 5%), alongside additional concerns such as the ferrying of youths between constituencies, the current findings suggest a shift in scale and pattern, with fewer parties reported.
- 3. Voter Education/Information:** The current reporting period recorded a significant decline in voter education activities compared to the previous period. Observer reports of voter education conducted by ECZ dropped from 47% to 8%, while voter education by civil society organisations and faith-based organisations declined from 2% to 1%. Similarly, radio and media-based voter education fell sharply from 25% to 1%. Targeted voter education for special interest groups also declined substantially, with activities targeting youth falling from 28% to 9%, women from 27% to 8%, and persons with disabilities from 23% to 5%. CCMG assesses that this reduction is likely linked to the conclusion of the voter register inspection exercise, which had previously driven heightened voter information campaigns. However, the sharp

decline also reveals an emerging gap in sustained civic and voter education efforts during a critical transition period toward nominations and campaigns. The ongoing reform to the EPA<sup>1</sup> and changes to the electoral system are also delaying the development and deployment of civic and voter education (CVE) activities. Compared to the previous reporting period, the current phase of the electoral process reflects a transition from administrative and voter registration-focused activities toward heightened political mobilisation and internal party contestation. While the overall environment remains relatively calm in proportion to the scale of national political activity, CCMG notes that the continued and evolving nature of Electoral Code of Conduct violations, combined with declining voter education efforts and intensifying political competition, present early warning signs that require proactive engagement and enforcement by electoral stakeholders ahead of the official campaign period.

### III. Endorsements by Traditional or Religious Leaders and Government

**Employees:** Reports of endorsements by traditional leaders declined slightly from 2% in the previous reporting period to 1% in the current reporting period. While this improvement is notable and may indicate improved adherence to political neutrality in some areas, incidents continue to be recorded across several provinces, demonstrating that the practice remains a concern. Reports involving civil servants and government officials openly supporting political actors declined during the current reporting period. While the previous period documented incidents involving District Commissioners campaigning and civil servants attending political party events, the current reporting period recorded no direct observer reports of civil servants using their influence to support political actors. Nonetheless, CCMG notes isolated allegations involving local governance structures and politically-linked mobilisation around social support programmes, suggesting that concerns around abuse of influence and politicisation of state-linked structures remain present in evolving forms

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<sup>1</sup> Section 80 of the EPA Electoral Process Act mandates the ECZ to conduct voter education, while Section 79 allows any natural or juristic person to conduct voter education.

### III. Detailed Findings

#### Preparations by the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ)

During this reporting period, 19% of CCMG observers reported preparations for electoral activities by ECZ. Additionally, 9% of CCMG observers reported the training of District Electoral Officers (DEOs) and Returning Officers (ROs). The ECZ has launched a nationwide training program for DEOs and ward ROs to prepare for the 2026 General Election nominations.

#### Voter Education/Information

- Eight percent (8%) of CCMG observers reported voter education activities by ECZ officials or voter education facilitators (VEFs).
- One percent (1%) of CCMG observers reported voter education activities conducted by civil society organisations (CSOs) or faith-based organisations (FBOs). For example, Young Women in Action was conducting voter education on the dangers of violence against women in elections in Chipata District of Eastern Province.
- One percent (1%) of CCMG observers reported voter education activities conducted by local media, including Sun FM (Copperbelt Province), Bangweulu FM (Luapula Province), Lusungu Radio, Liberty Radio, and Isunga Radio in Northern Province.
- Of those observers who reported voter education activities, 9% reported activities targeting youth, 8% targeting women, and 5% targeting persons with disabilities.

#### Distribution of Voter Education by Stakeholders (31 March to 27 April)



**8%**

of CCMG observers reported voter education activities by ECZ officials or voter education facilitators (VEFs)



**1%**

of CCMG observers reported voter education activities conducted by civil society organisations (CSOs) or faith-based organisations (FBOs)



**1%**

of CCMG observers reported voter education activities conducted by local media

## Political Parties, Traditional and Religious Leaders, and Civil Servants

- Ten percent (10%) of CCMG observers reported campaigning outside the official campaign period by the United Party for National Development (UPND), and 5% by another party/candidate (not UPND). These instances were prevalent in all the provinces.
- One percent (1%) of CCMG observers reported instances in which traditional or religious leaders used their influence to support a particular party or candidate.

Province	Constituency(s)	Type	The party being supported
Central	Lufubu, Kapiri Mposhi	Traditional Leader	UPND, independent
Eastern	Chasefu, Chama North, Luangeni, Lumezi, Nyimba	Traditional Leader, Religious	UPND, independent
Muchinga	Nakonde, Mafinga	Traditional Leader	PF, Citizen First
Lusaka	Chongwe	Traditional Leader	UPND
North-Western	Kasempa, Zambezi East, Zambezi West	Traditional Leader	UPND
Northern	Lupososhi	Traditional Leader	UPND
Western	Nalikwanda	Traditional Leader	UPND

- Twenty-eight (28%) of CCMG observers reported activities conducted by UPND, and 9% reported activities conducted by another party (other than UPND) or an independent candidate. Of the observers who reported UPND party activities, only 10% reported that police provided security during the party activities/meetings/rallies. Of those observers who reported activities by other parties or independent candidates, only one (1) CCMG reported police providing security during the activities/meetings/rallies for other parties or independent candidates.
- During this reporting period, none of CCMG's observers reported instances of non-elected government officials (i.e., civil servants) and/or government employees using their influence to support a particular party or candidate.
- In Masaiti constituency in Shimubanga Ward (Copperbelt Province), UPND officials and Ward Development Committee (WDC) officials were collecting voters' cards and NRC numbers from residents. The details were collected on the pretext of enrolling all residents who submitted details in the cash for work programmes. The officials told residents that anyone who did not support the UPND and vote for them on 13th August 2026 would be removed from the cash for work programme.

## The Distribution of Money, Foodstuffs, or Other Items/Goods as an Inducement to Support a Political Party or Candidate.

Twelve percent (12%) of CCMG observers reported the distribution of money, foodstuffs, or other items/goods as an inducement to support a political party or candidate. These practices are widespread across the country, except for Northern Province, as detailed in the table below:

Province	Constituencies	Goods	Parties Involved
Central	Kabwe Central, Shibujuni	Military boots, berets, fishing jackets, ninja masks, cash, UPND T-shirts	UPND
Copperbelt	Nchanga, Roan, Kalulushi, Masaiti, Chibubu	Cash, food (tomatoes), UPND-branded t-shirts, and a water pump	UPND
Eastern	Lusangazi, Nyimba, Mambwe, Chasefu, Lundazi, Chipangali, Chipata Central, Kasenengwa, Lumezi, Mkaika, Msanzala, Vubwi	Soap, branded t-shirts, cash, food (salt), books, mattresses, Mealie-meal, UPND branded chitenges, cement, Iron sheets	UPND, Independent
Luapula	Kawambwa, Pambashe	Branded party regalia (t-shirts, chitenges), cash	UPND
Lusaka	Chongwe, Lusaka Central, Kanyama, Rufunsa	Sanitary health kits, computers, food, beer, branded party regalia (t-shirts, chitenges), mattresses & blankets	UPND, Independent
Muchinga	Chinsali	Cash	Independent
North-Western	Kasempa, Mufumbwe, Solwezi West	Cash, food	UPND, Tonse Alliance, Independent
Northern	n/a	n/a	n/a
Western	Nalikwanda, Mwandu, Shangombo, Sikongo	Clothes, cash, branded party regalia (caps, t-shirts), food stuff (mealie meal)	PF, UPND
Southern	Gwembe, Kalomo Central, Monze Central, Siavonga	Caps, t-shirts, food (mealie meal), cement, chitenges, solar panel	UPND

- Four (4) CCMG observers witnessed or heard of buying or collecting NRC or voter card numbers (collecting details only and not the physical cards) as detailed in the critical incidents section below.
- Five (5) CCMG observers witnessed or heard of instances of youth dressed in military (combat) attire or wearing ski masks (not surgical masks). These included the following incidents:
  - In Mushindano (North-Western Province), UPND cadres were seen wearing military camouflage pants during the funeral procession for the late Chief Mulonga.
  - At a gathering at Linda Grounds in Lusaka, during a campaign meeting by an aspiring UPND MP candidate, some youths were observed clad in military boots and ski masks.
  - UPND-aligned youths attacked a Lusaka-based journalist on 19th April, 2026, whilst armed with tasers and clad in military boots and masks.
- Three (3) CCMG observers reported the use of vehicles without number plates for political activities by UPND cadres. These incidents were reported in Ngabwe (Central Province), Chienge (Luapula Province), and Mufumbwe (North-Western Province).
- One (1) CCMG observer reported the use of threatening, abusive, or insulting language against persons with disabilities as voters or party supporters, detailed under the critical incidents section. None of CCMG's observers witnessed or heard of any incidents of harassment of voter educators in their constituency; instances of use of language which is inflammatory, defamatory, or insulting or which is incitement to public disorder, insurrection, hate, violence or war; instances where a party or a candidate used tribal/ethnic/religious/social group/gender pressures to incite violence; any incident where a party supporter or voter was sexually assaulted for political motives; political party/independent candidate prevented from conducting a campaign activity in a public space by the police, including prisons; campaign meetings happening in a prohibited place; destruction of campaign materials (posters, offices); buying, confiscating, or destroying NRC or voter cards (collecting physical cards); or use of state vehicles during political party campaign activities.

## Critical Incidents:

In this reporting period, CCMG received a total of eight (8) critical incident reports, including three (3) incidents of politically motivated violence or attack, one (1) incident of disruption of a political party meeting, and four (4) incidents of buying/collection of voters' cards or NRC details, detailed as follows:

### **Politically-Motivated Violence or Attack (3 incidents)**

- On 8 April 2026, a CCMG observer in Shangombo (Western Province) reported a violent incident at Natukoma School grounds during UPND intra-party elections. The incident reportedly occurred after results favoring the camp aligned with the sitting Member of Parliament triggered dissatisfaction among a female aspiring parliamentary candidate and her supporters. Tensions escalated when a verbal exchange and insults were directed at supporters of the sitting MP, who retaliated, resulting in a physical confrontation, including stone throwing, with one supporter injured during the clash. Police later arrived on the scene; however, the female aspiring candidate and some of her supporters fled from the scene. CCMG notes that this incident constitutes a case of Violence Against Women in Elections (VAWE).
- On 8 April 2026, an observer in Mpongwe District (Copperbelt Province) reported an incident involving the disruption of a radio programme on Mpongwe Radio and alleged intimidation of media personnel. It was reported that two UPND members were participating in a live radio programme during which they raised concerns regarding the conduct of the party's intra-party elections. During the programme, the Officer in Charge at Mpongwe Police Station, accompanied by suspected UPND supporters, reportedly entered the station premises and forcibly stopped the broadcast. The reasons for the shutdown were not communicated at the time of the incident.
- On 19 April 2026, an observer in Kanyama (Lusaka Province) reported a violent incident at Linda Grounds involving the assault of a Lusaka-based journalist who was covering a political party event. It was reported that youths dressed in UPND regalia disrupted the gathering, causing commotion at the venue. When the journalist began filming the incident, the youths allegedly turned on him and physically assaulted him for recording the events. No police involvement was reported.

### **Disruption of Political Party Event/Meeting (1 incident)**

- On 7 April 2026, an observer in Sesheke District (Western Province) reported an incident of intra-party conflict involving the UPND during elections to select party executive leaders. The dispute reportedly arose when the Member of Parliament for Sioma, who

had travelled to Sesheke with party members, attempted to chair the meeting. Local UPND members objected to this arrangement and insisted that the meeting should instead be chaired by their local Member of Parliament. The disagreement reportedly escalated into arguments among party members, and the meeting failed to proceed due to the lack of consensus. No police involvement was reported at the time of the incident.

### **Buying/Collecting of Voters' Card or NRC Numbers or Physical Cards (4 incidents)**

- On various occasions between 31 March and 5 April 2026, a CCMG observer in Chimbamilonga District (Northern Province) reported an incident in Mwambeshi Ward where the Tonse Alliance chairperson allegedly collected National Registration Card (NRC) and voter card details from community members at a local headman's residence. It was reported that after submitting their details, individuals were given handouts including unbranded chitenges, 2.5 litres of cooking oil, and K100 in cash.
- On 8 April 2026, a CCMG observer in Shiwangandu District (Muchinga Province) reported an incident at Lwanya Market where a suspected male UPND cadre was allegedly collecting NRC numbers and voter card details from members of the public. When questioned by the observer, the individual reportedly stated that the information, which was being recorded in a paper register, was intended to identify UPND members and non-members.
- On 11 April 2026, a CCMG observer in Chawama Constituency (Lusaka Province) reported an incident in which women affiliated with the Tonse Alliance reportedly went door-to-door, including visiting the observer's residence, collecting NRC numbers and voter card details from residents. It was reported that the information was being collected for data purposes related to candidate nominations in Chawama Constituency.
- On 23 April 2026, an observer in Mufumbwe (North-Western Province) reported an incident in which a UPND aspiring candidate for Member of Parliament and his team collected voters' cards and NRC details from members in the Miselele area, allegedly for the purpose of forming executive committees for the party's women and youth wings.

## IV. Recommendations and Conclusion

Based on CCMG's findings from the observation of the general political and electoral environment in all constituencies, districts, and provinces in this reporting period, CCMG makes the following key recommendations to stakeholders:

### ***Electoral Commission of Zambia***

- **Electoral Code of Conduct Enforcement:** On 27 April 2026, the ECZ Chief Electoral Officer stated that the Commission would closely monitor compliance with the Electoral Code of Conduct during the campaign period, particularly in light of growing concerns regarding the use of public resources. CCMG notes the ECZ's intention to engage aspiring candidates immediately after nominations on the rules and regulations governing campaigns. However, CCMG emphasises that effective enforcement of the Electoral Code of Conduct should not be confined to the official campaign period alone. In this regard, CCMG recommends that the ECZ adopt a more proactive enforcement approach and begin addressing violations of the Code before the commencement of the official campaign period. In addition to early engagement with aspiring candidates, the Commission should strengthen continuous engagement with political parties and key stakeholders to promote a clear and shared understanding of the Electoral Code of Conduct and its enforcement provisions. Further, CCMG urges the ECZ to take timely and decisive action to investigate and address all reported breaches of the Code, including politically motivated violence, VAWE, premature campaigning, voter inducement through the distribution of handouts, and the use of motor vehicles without number plates during political activities, as documented by CCMG observers across the country during this reporting period.
- **Enhance Monitoring of Misuse of Public Resources and Voter Information:** CCMG is concerned by reports linking the collection of NRC and voter card details to promises of benefits and access to empowerment programmes. CCMG recommends that the ECZ, in collaboration with relevant oversight institutions, closely monitor and investigate any practices that may amount to voter inducement, coercion, or misuse of personal voter information.
- **Scale Up Sustained Civic and Voter Education:** The significant decline in voter education activities during this reporting period demonstrates the need for sustained voter engagement beyond voter registration exercises, particularly in light of the significant changes to the electoral system resulting from the constitutional and anticipated EPA reforms. CCMG recommends that the ECZ expand partnerships

with CSOs, FBOs, media institutions, and community-based organisations; increase targeted voter education for women, youth, and persons with disabilities; prioritise voter education on nomination procedures, electoral rights and responsibilities, and peaceful participation; and intensify public awareness campaigns ahead of the campaign period.

- **Scale Up Pro-Active Engagement and Information Sharing with Political Parties, Civil Society, Citizens:** Given the significant changes to the electoral system for the 2026 elections and the complex implications for political parties and voters, the ECZ should scale up pro-active engagement and information sharing with political parties and civil society stakeholders. This includes fora where questions can be asked and answered, timely information on key processes and procedures provided, and the sharing of information in usable formats (e.g. lists of new constituencies and wards in analysable files, not image files). The ECZ should also release full, detailed information on the process for the delimitation of new boundaries, including information on the the criteria outlined in Article 59 of the Constitution on delimitation, namely population and ensuring that the number of inhabitants in each constituency is reasonable.

### ***Political Parties***

- **Promote Peaceful and Democratic Internal Processes:** CCMG notes with concern that several incidents of violence or confrontation during this reporting period arose from intra-party disputes and adoption processes. Political parties should strengthen internal dispute resolution mechanisms; promote transparent and inclusive candidate selection procedures; hold party members accountable for acts of violence, intimidation, or hate speech; and ensure that intra-party competition does not escalate into violence or harassment.
- **Uphold the Electoral Code of Conduct:** CCMG calls on political parties, and particularly party leaders, to uphold the Electoral Code of Conduct and lead by example, and hold their party members accountable for any breaches. CCMG calls on political parties to familiarise themselves with the enforcement mechanisms of the Electoral Code of Conduct through SI 35 of 2020. During this reporting period, CCMG's observers documented the following Code breaches and other offences (details contained in the report below):
  - Politically-motivated violence, use of abusive and insulting language;
  - Campaigning outside of the official campaign period, use of inducements

(handouts), collecting of voter registration card details, and use of cars with no number plates for political purposes;

- Endorsements of political parties/candidates by traditional and religious leaders, and government employees/civil servants; and
- Intra-party violence during intra- party campaigns and elections.
- **Other Practices to be Condemned:** CCMG continues to urge all political parties to refrain from the use of military attire, as was documented during this reporting period. This practice is a violation of Section 6 of the State Security Act and has the potential to intimidate voters and escalate tension. Further, CCMG notes that previous efforts by the ECZ, political parties, and other stakeholders to mitigate politically motivated violence have recommended that political parties not use military attire.
- **Information Sharing and Adherence to New Electoral Legislation:** With the anticipated EPA reform and 2025 constitutional reform, the electoral system for the 2026 elections is significantly different from the 2021 elections. Political parties have a duty to familiarise themselves with the new provisions, particularly the proportional representation seats, and ensure their officials, members and voters understand these changes. Parties should adopt democratic and transparent internal procedures for the development of their proportional representation lists and provide this information to voters so that they can make an informed choice.

### **Civil Society Organisations**

- **Voter Education/Information:** As observers continued to document a relatively small amount of voter information/education during this observation period, CSOs should increase efforts in this regard and specifically increase their voter education and information campaigns targeted to the needs of women, youth, and persons with disabilities. This is particularly critical given the significant changes to the electoral system.
- **Promote Electoral Integrity and Accountability:** CCMG continues to urge CSOs to enhance advocacy efforts to strengthen enforcement of the Electoral Code of Conduct by the ECZ and other relevant stakeholders to address electoral malpractices such as inducements and the collection of personal voter information, among others, particularly in the lead-up to the campaign period.

### ***Traditional and Religious Leaders and Civil Servants***

- **Maintain Strict Political Neutrality:** CCMG urges traditional and religious leaders not to use their influence to support a political party or candidate, and encourages traditional leaders and civil servants to practice political neutrality as outlined in the Electoral Code of Conduct. CCMG specifically encourages traditional and religious leaders to use their influence to promote peace and unity, and foster a spirit of solidarity among citizens, leading up to the August 13 general elections.

### ***Zambia Police***

- **Provision of Security and Upholding Peace:** The Police should ensure that they provide security to all political parties equitably and without fear or favor in the management of political activities and meetings, and should not use the Public Order Act to limit political space. CCMG calls on the Police to swiftly investigate all instances of politically-motivated violence, and to coordinate with the Electoral Commission of Zambia and the Anti-Corruption Commission, as appropriate, in investigating any breaches of the Electoral Code of Conduct.

### ***Road Transport and Safety Agency***

- **Enhance Enforcement of Road Traffic Laws and Regulations:** The Road Transport and Safety Agency (RTSA), established under the Road Traffic Act of 2002, is mandated to oversee road safety, vehicle registration, and the enforcement of traffic regulations in Zambia. CCMG remains concerned by the increasing use of unregistered motor vehicles during political activities across the country. The use of vehicles without number plates poses significant security and accountability risks, particularly as such vehicles are difficult to trace when implicated in politically related criminal activities or acts of violence. In this regard, CCMG recommends that RTSA, in collaboration with the Zambia Traffic Police, intensify roadside inspections and enforcement operations aimed at identifying and penalising owners and operators of unregistered vehicles used for political activities. CCMG further urges the institutions to strengthen targeted public awareness and road safety campaigns, particularly in politically active areas, in order to discourage this growing practice, specifically ahead of the official campaign

period.

### ***Violence Against Women in Elections***

- In light of the reported incident arising from intra-party elections where a dispute escalated into verbal abuse and violence between supporters of competing candidates, CCMG recommends that both the ECZ and political parties take urgent and decisive measures to prevent the recurrence of such conduct. Political parties, in particular, should strengthen internal dispute resolution mechanisms to ensure that grievances emerging from internal electoral processes are managed in a peaceful, transparent, and credible manner, without resorting to intimidation, harassment, or violence. *CCMG further encourages victims, witnesses, and members of the public to report incidents of political violence, intimidation, or Violence Against Women in Elections (VAWE) through the Lifeline/Childline Hotline on 933/116 to access reporting and referral support services.*

**LIFELINE**  
**CHILDLINE**

# **POLITICAL VIOLENCE?**

**If threats, harassment, or intimidation target women because of elections, it's violence against women in elections (VAWE).**

**Support for violence against women in elections is available.**

**Call or Text Lifeline 933 or 116**

## Conclusion

CCMG's long-term observation covering the period 31 March to 27 April 2026 indicates that Zambia's pre-election environment remains generally calm but increasingly politically active as the country approaches nominations and the campaign period. Compared to the previous reporting period, CCMG observed a clear shift from predominantly administrative electoral activities toward intensified political mobilisation and intra-party competition.

While the overall proportion of reported Electoral Code of Conduct violations remains relatively low, CCMG notes emerging trends that warrant close attention. These include increasing intra-party tensions, persistent early campaigning, growing use of inducements, continued collection of voter information for political purposes, and incidents involving intimidation and attacks on journalists. The current reporting period also reflects a shift in political contestation from primarily inter-party clashes to disputes arising within political parties during adoption and leadership processes.

At the same time, CCMG observed a significant decline in voter education activities by both state and non-state actors following the voter register inspection exercise. This reduction risks creating gaps in public awareness and preparedness ahead of a critical phase of the electoral process. Voter education, as well as the provision of information to political parties, is critical during the pre-election period, particularly because of the significant changes to the electoral system stemming from the constitutional and anticipated EPA reforms.

CCMG further notes that experiences from previous electoral cycles, including the 2021 General Elections, demonstrate that electoral tensions and Code of Conduct violations often increase as the country transitions into the official campaign period. There is therefore a need for early intervention, stronger enforcement of electoral laws, and sustained stakeholder engagement to prevent escalation.

CCMG calls on the ECZ, political parties, law enforcement agencies, civil society, media institutions, and all electoral stakeholders to uphold the rule of law, respect democratic principles, and promote peaceful political participation. Proactive enforcement of the Electoral Code of Conduct, protection of political rights, and expanded civic and voter education will be critical to sustaining public confidence and ensuring credible, inclusive, and peaceful elections.

CCMG remains committed to providing independent, evidence-based observation throughout the electoral cycle and will continue monitoring developments closely in support of peaceful, transparent, and credible 2026 General Elections.

For more information on the work of CCMG and related reports and statements, please visit the CCMG website at CCMG Zambia. To contact the CCMG secretariat, please send an email to [info@ccmgzambia.org](mailto:info@ccmgzambia.org).

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