



CCMG Raises Concern Over Accreditation of Monitors and Observers ahead of 13 August Polls

For Immediate Release

24 July 2026

With three weeks remaining before Election Day, the Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) calls on the Electoral Commission of Zambia to urgently clarify key aspects of the process for accrediting monitors. CCMG notes with concern that the ECZ has, on July 21, the day when the accreditation process was to launch, issued a Public Notice on Accreditation, overhauling the previously announced process for accreditation. The late change, and overall poor communication and consultation with stakeholders, leaves election monitors, observers, and other stakeholders with limited time to adjust their operational plans.

CCMG and other stakeholders have engaged the ECZ since the previous electoral cycle in 2021, providing evidence-based recommendations to improve and streamline the accreditation system, bringing Zambia in line with regional and international best practices and reducing the administrative burden on stakeholders and the ECZ itself. Following the announcement of the online-only accreditation system, CCMG and others raised concerns about the practicality of implementing a solely online system. During these engagements, stakeholders highlighted possible challenges, including the difficulty of determining and managing the number of monitors that organisations could deploy per constituency, the number and storage requirements of the multiple uploaded documents, accessibility limitations for applicants, and potential exclusion of eligible monitors due to technological barriers.

While CCMG appreciates the ECZ's decision to introduce a hybrid accreditation system that allows for both online and physical applications, the late communication of this change raises important questions regarding implementation readiness. CCMG therefore calls on the ECZ to urgently provide clarification on the following:

1. **Readiness of District Electoral Offices:** The ECZ should clarify how prepared District Electoral Offices (Civic Centres) are to manage the physical accreditation process. Stakeholders require assurance that district offices have adequate personnel, systems, and resources to process applications efficiently within the accreditation period. The ECZ should clarify if the officers have been trained on in-person accreditation and what, if any, instructions have been issued to them.
2. **Implementation of the Hybrid Accreditation System:** The ECZ should provide clear guidance on how the hybrid system will operate in practice and how it will ensure equal access to accreditation for all stakeholders across the country. In the Public Notice, those stakeholders submitting online will also need to present themselves in-person in

Mulungushi for verification, calling into question the utility of the online system if in-person verification is also required.

3. Introduction of Additional Accreditation Options: Given the challenges associated with online accreditation and the limited timeframe available, CCMG recommends that the ECZ consider allowing reduced administrative requirements for accreditation, in line with regional and international best practice. This would include forgoing the submission of photos, copies of NRCs, and allow these to be verified only in-person.

Accreditation is a critical component of election monitoring, and timely communication is essential to enable stakeholders to make adequate preparations for effective deployment. Accreditation processes should facilitate the monitoring and observation exercises to enhance the credibility and transparency of electoral processes. The Electoral Process Act recognises the role and rights of election monitors and observers, and United Nations Special Rapporteurs recognise election observers as human rights defenders. Stakeholders can only effectively contribute to electoral integrity when processes affecting their participation are established and communicated through timely and meaningful engagement.

CCMG calls upon the ECZ to strengthen stakeholder communication, provide urgent clarification on the current arrangements, and ensure that accreditation procedures facilitate, rather than constrain, the participation of election monitors, observers, and other electoral stakeholders.

//ENDS\\



Peter Mwanangombe
Program Director

Contact Details
Peter Mwanangombe
Program Director
+260977545592

Nalishebo Saapi
Communications Officer
+260979302149