

# Facts and Figures on Zimbabwe's Voters' Roll, Registration and Elections

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Elections are a fundamental building block for democracy and an important process in the governance of any country. They confer legitimacy on the leaders and they (leaders) in turn derive their mandate to lead through the electoral process. However, for the conferment of such legitimacy to be credible, there is need for the wholesale participation of the country's electorate. More often than not, a country's voters' roll does not contain all members of a nation who are eligible to vote. In the case of Zimbabwe this would imply all those that are above 18 years of age and ordinarily resident in Zimbabwe.

The figures below depict the nature of electoral participation in Zimbabwe:

- ✓ According to the Research and Advocacy Unit (RAU), there were 5, 934,768 voters as of March 2008. The Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network (ZESN) notes that there was a 6, 35% increase in the number of voters on the voters' roll between 2008 and 2010. This translates to an increase of 376, 858 voters during this period.
- ✓ ZESN notes that 95% of voters used voter registration drives to register as voters.
- ✓ According to RAU, of the total number of registered voters, there are more people registered as voters in purely rural areas (3, 845,897) than in purely urban constituencies (1, 381,026).
- ✓ The **Youth Forum** notes that as of March 2008, there were 1, 087,000 voters on the voters' roll who were under 29 years of age. This represents 18.31% of the total voters' roll. These figures were calculated using figures obtained from a RAU research.
- ✓ A survey by the **Youth Forum** notes that 67% out of a sample of 100 youths expressed encountering difficulties in obtaining proof of residence.
- ✓ The requirement for proof of residence has seen many youths failing to register.

The **Youth Forum** advocates for the removal of such a requirement and an amendment which will see the registrar General not demanding the proof but only asking for it in a case where they are strongly convinced the individual is not a resident in that particular constituency. In that case, the Registrar General must note his reservations and reasons in writing to the individual.

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