



**Editor:** Joseph Hanlon | **Publisher:** Edson Cortez | **News Editor:** Borges Nhamire  
**Reporters:** Aldemiro Bande, Magda Mendonça, Sheila Nhancale

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Rua Fernão Melo e Castro, nº 124, Maputo. eleicoes@cipeleicoes.org <https://cipeleicoes.org/eng/>  
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## Fake News: Zambézia STAE claims perfection, but falls a long way short

**S**TAE Zambézia's claim of perfect operation last week did not stand up to investigation by our correspondents. "Of the 809 registration brigades in the province of Zambézia, covering 1,144 registration posts, all of them are operating in full, corresponding to 100% operability," said STAE on 13 May in its report Informe da 4ª Semana do Recenseamento Eleitoral na Província da Zambézia..

But our correspondents report that late last week, dozens of Zambézia registration posts were closed, largely due to technical problems with the registration computer, known as the Mobile ID. In a report that looks like fake news, STAE Zambézia said "the Mobile IDs and their software are functioning perfectly". Some posts have never opened, since the 15 April start of registration.

In contrast to Zambézia STAE, our correspondents report:

**Gurué:** EPC (primary school) de Nipeve, has never opened due to lack of material. EP Contape closed since Wednesday due to battery problems. EPC Montes Namuli, closed for more than a week.

**Gilé:** At least three posts closed for more than two weeks because of equipment failures, at Naquiçupa, Namitathary and Nacuna.

**Quelimane:** Equipment failures have closed the posts at Cololo and Namuinho for five days.

**Nicoadala:** Three weeks ago STAE transferred the Mobile ID from Muloguiua to another post 28 km away, and the post is not open.

**Milange:** EPC de Mbessa closed for the past 10 days because printer not working. EPC de Xai-Xai, in Chitambo never opened because the Mobile ID did not function; it was removed by technicians and never returned.

**Maganja da Costa:** The Mobile ID at EPC de Muiebe, in Nante, has not been working for a week. STAE was informed.

**Morrumbala:** EPC Trinta closed because Mobile ID not working. At EPC de Nangaze and EPC de Sabe people can register but their voter's cards are not being printed.

**Inhassunge:** EPC de Illova has constant problems with Mobile ID.

**Mocuba:** EPC de Chingoma and Mpunha have no electricity supply.

## Some districts in Gaza & Zambézia beat targets

Despite the problems and fake news, Zambézia has been catching up. By 12 May it has registered 56% of its target - still too low but above the national average. Five districts in Zambézia has beaten their targets for the whole registration period with two weeks still to go. STAE reports that by 15 May these were over their total targets: Quelimane (103%), Maganja da Costa (102%), Milange (100%), Mocuba (100%), and Mocubela (218%).

Highest registration is in Gaza (75% on 12 May) and targets has already been topped last week in Xai-Xai (102%), Bilene (103%), Chibuto (100%), Mapai (101%) and Massingir (101%).

# No registration extension

Registration is below expectations, but there will be no extension beyond 30 May, declared CNE President Abdul Carimo in a press statement Wednesday 15 May. "There are 15 days left and that is enough to register everyone who has not done so," he said. "Conditions have been created so that registration posts will be open." He appealed to people to register as soon as possible, to avoid long queues "and other kinds of discomfort that might occur in the pressures of the last days."

A dour CNE President read out a statement he appeared not to have written, and took no questions from the press.

## Nampula & Niassa hit by equipment problems

Two of the lowest three registration levels on 12 May were in Nampula (44%) and Niassa (41%).

In **Sanga**, Niassa, STAE operations head Alexandre Jalane says there is simply not enough equipment at district level, and five registration posts are closed. EP1 de Mbemba has been closed for a week due to lack of printer toner and a STAE technician on Saturday could not solve the problem. Registration is also paralysed at EP1 de Chilapitangongo, Merenda, de Micaílo and Chicuedo.

Elsewhere in these provinces, our correspondents report serious equipment problems:

**Mogincual**: at Naminane turnout is so high that people have to mark their place in the queue a day in advance. But registration has stopped because the printer is not working.

**Mogovolas**: EP1 de Mochiua, Mobile ID not working since 6 May.

**Lalaúa**: three posts with non-working printers, Lúrio, Meti and Naquessa.

**Malema**: EPC de Nataleia, no fuel for the generator.

**Nampula**: EPC Parque Popular, Mobile ID will reissue lost voter's cards but not accept new voters.

**Nacala Porto**: EP1 de Micajúne, closed due to lack of forms for three weeks. Similarly, in **Nacarôa**, EPC de Munama has been closed for five days due to lack of forms.

## Attack in Nangade, and other issues

An armed group attacked Ngalonga, **Nangade**, Cabo Delgado, Friday night 17 May, burning 113

houses and two mills. No one was killed, but it halted registration.

Our correspondents also report

**Refusal**: In **Angoche**, Nampula, brigades at EPC de Johar and Escola Secundária de Angoche are refusing to register people without documents, even when they have the two registered voters who will identify them, as required by law.

**No Information**: Registration brigade members are refusing to give any information to observers in **Mabote**, Inhambane (EP2 de Mabotese) and **Marracuene**, Maputo province (EPC de Mbalane).

**Bribes**: In **Lalaúa**, Nampula, a STAE inspection brigade on Friday 17 May was told by local people that the supervisor at Escola Primária de Naculue, Bento Faustino, was taking Mt 50-100 (40-80 US cents) from people to allow them to jump the queue and register immediately.

**Children**: In **Liupo**, three children from the same family were arrested for having registered but not being voting age.

**Burned**: In **Chibuto**, Gaza, Manuelito Bango, age 32, was arrested for setting fire to the registration posts at Escola Primária de Maiveni, on Saturday 18 May. The fire damaged equipment and registration has stopped.

## Collecting cards

There are several reports of officials or party people in Nampula collecting documents, for unclear purposes.

In **Lalaúa**, Nampula, a Frelimo registration post observer at EPC de Nioce named Jaime Abacar was caught on 16 with many 2013 and 2014 voters cards and various identity documents. Some said he was being paid to register people; others said he have been instructed to do it by Frelimo.

In **Malema**, Nampula, neighbourhood secretaries are collecting documents from residents and then registering them.

## From other observer groups

# Half of registration posts have problems

Half of the 2,893 registration posts visited by a coalition of six observer groups had problems, José Dias told a press conference Thursday.

Problems were serious enough that 10% of registration posts did not open the first day, and on subsequent days 17% were closed. Augusta Almeida said that 44 posts in Gurué, Zambézia, and 5 in Mogovolas, Nampula, have never opened because of a lack of power supplies for the Mobile ID registration computers.

The observers conclude that the host of problems with power supplies and equipment failures are making a significant contribution to the registration being below targets.

The target is for brigades to register people in 3 to 5 minutes, but only 65% of posts were meeting this. Most posts are no accessible to people with

disabilities. Frelimo has party observers in 96% of posts visited, while Renamo has them in only 59%. Of brigade members, 53% are women.

The civil society organisations in the group are Associação Desenvolvimento e Sociedade (ADS), Comissão Episcopal de Justiça e Paz (CEJP) da Igreja Católica de Moçambique, Liga de ONGs Moçambicanas (JOINT), Centro de Aprendizagem e Capacitação da Sociedade Civil (CESC), Solidariedade Moçambique and Sociedade Aberta (SA), all based in Maputo. They have 600 observers working in teams of three, and report they have observers in all districts.



Partners:



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