

2018 Local Elections - 68

Mozambique Political Process Bulletin

16 October 2018

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Editor: Joseph Hanlon (j.hanlon@open.ac.uk)

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Final election results on our website: <http://bit.ly/LocEI2018>. More detailed tables will be available tomorrow.

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Record 60% turnout

Across the 53 municipalities, turnout was 60.3% on 10 October, significantly above previous municipal elections (2013 - 46%, 2008 - 46% and 2003 - 28%) Maputo turnout was 63% and Matola 59% compared to 50% and 38% five years ago. Four places had turnout over 70% with Metangula topping the list at 77%. Malema had the lowest turnout, at 39%.

Nationally, Frelimo won 51.78% of valid votes, Renamo 38.90%, and MDM 8.50%, with small parties and citizens lists gaining only 0.82%.

Only 2.77% of votes were invalid (nulo). But levels were suspiciously high in 5 municipalities: Moatize 7.35% (the highest in the election), Chiure 6.72%, Ulongue 6.39%, Nhamayabue 6.01% and Gurue 5.94%. There were 1.86% blank votes and only one unusual municipality, Monapo with 6.17% of voters putting a blank paper in the ballot box.

In Matola, Beira, and seven other municipalities, the mayor will not have a majority in the municipal assembly. This will require an agreement with at least one other party in order to govern effectively. Under the new municipalities law, if the Municipal Assembly does not approve the municipality's five year plan or other key documents, the Council of Ministers can force new elections - but is not required to.

These numbers are from final election results as issued by the city and district election commissions, some of which are contested.

Of 53 municipalities:

Frelimo - 39 municipalities confirmed

Renamo - 8 confirmed - Quelimane, Ilha de Moçambique, Angoche, Nacala, Chiure, Nampula, Malema, Cuamba

MDM - 1 - Beira

Renamo is challenging at least 5 Frelimo wins - Alto Molocue, Moatize, Monapo, and Matola where the margin was 1% or less, and Marromeu where police took ballot boxes.

Complaints about local elections are submitted to the district courts, and any decision can be appealed to the Constitutional Council. Renamo has already submitted an appeal to the Tete city court. Complaints in Chimoio and Matola are being submitted jointly by Renamo and MDM. Independent of complaints to the courts, party nominated members will raise these issues within the National Elections Commission, which must confirm or change the district results by Thursday 25 October.

Did Moatize CDE reject more than 1400 Renamo votes?

Moatize district election commission conducted a complete recount in which they threw out more than 1400 Renamo votes. After the recount, invalid votes were 7.2% of the total vote. This is highest level in the country, and so far about the normal 2.77% as to be highly suspicious.

According to the local weekly paper Malacha, the chair of the Moatize CDE confirmed that they broke into the warehouse to conduct the recount. There are four locks on the warehouse, with keys held by Renamo, Frelimo, MDM and STAE, and all must open their locks. Renamo opposed the recount and refused to open its lock, so the CDE broke in and did the recount without Renamo being present.

Aparicio Jose de Nascimento, editor of Malacha, organised a parallel count by collecting results from the 49 polling stations, and at 2 am on 11 October published the count showing Renamo 11,166 votes and Frelimo 9,789. Renamo national election agent, Andre Majibire, said the first CDE/STAE count gave Renamo 11,169 votes and Frelimo 9,856, very close to the Malacha parallel count.

Nascimento said that an unusually high 1,449 votes were challenged during the counting process. It would appear that most of these votes were for Renamo, and most were accepted as valid during the first count, but rejected in the second count. The second count gave Frelimo 9,839 votes and Renamo 9,742. Thus Frelimo's vote changed very little, but Renamo's vote fell by 1424.

+ **Ulongue**, also in Tete, also had a very high percentage of invalid votes - 7.0%. It was not enough to make a difference, however, as Frelimo won a convincing victory with 59% of the vote. Also in Tete, **Nhamayabue** had a high 6% invalid votes.

Editor threatened

Malacha editor Nascimento was threatened with kidnapping on Thursday 11 October because he published the parallel count, as well as pictures of abandoned and vandalised voting kits in Moatize, according to a statement today from MISA, the Media Institute for Southern Africa. Nascimento felt the threats sufficiently serious to temporarily go into hiding.

Misa today reports four other serious threats related to election reporting, one in Manica and three in Nampula.

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There are two archives of historic elections data, at IESE on <http://www.iese.ac.mz/eleicoes-resultados/> and at London School of Economics on <http://bit.ly/MozEIData> The LSE archive now has detailed 2013 and 2014 results, by polling station.

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