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Detailed coverage of 2018 municipal and 2019 national elections will again be provided by the Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, which has covered all of Mozambique's multi-party elections. Again, we will have a large team of local journalists throughout the country, ensuring that our reports are accurate and verified. Publication is monthly during preparation periods but will become more frequent and we will publish daily in election periods. Elections newsletters are distributed on the "Mozambique News Reports and Clippings" mailing list, and will become more frequent.

**If you do not want to receive the elections newsletter,  
simply send a note to [j.hanlon@open.ac.uk](mailto:j.hanlon@open.ac.uk) with the subject line "no election".**

The elections newsletters is also in Portuguese; para subscrever <http://eepurl.com/cYjhdB>  
The first issue, "Registration in March-April for 10 October 2018 local elections", is available on <http://cipmoz.org:9000/elections2018/>

## Registration trial planned for 9 districts

**T**here will be a trial registration in nine districts in November - but only to train staff, test equipment, and pilot new improved voter's cards. More than 100,000 people are being asked to participate.

The exercise will take place 6 to 30 November in three districts in each of three provinces. In order to avoid confusion, districts have been chosen which will not have municipal elections next year and thus will not have a real registration next year. That registration will take place in March and April 2018 in 53 districts and cities which contain municipalities with elected mayors and assemblies. Local elections will be on 10 October 2018.

The November trial registration will cost \$300,000 and the hope is to cover 116,000 people, according to Paulo Cuinica, spokesperson for the National Elections Commission (Comissão Nacional de Eleições, CNE), at a press conference last week.

The election technical secretariat (Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral, STAE) hopes to use the same portable computers and other registration equipment which was used for 2013 and 2014 elections. So the main purpose of the trial is to test that equipment to make sure it still

functions well. It will also be used to train STAE technicians for next year's registration.

The trial will also cover the second step of the normal process, when register books will be displayed 1-4 December so that voters can check the accuracy of their entry. As this is just a mock registration, all data will then be destroyed and the voters cards issued will not have any validity; people will still need to register for real for the 2019 national election.

STAE will have 58 brigades of 13 members each working in 9 distritos: Eráti, Moma and Memba (Nampula); Búzi, Caia and Cheringoma (Sofala); and Magude, Marracuene and Moamba (Maputo province).

## **Aiming for improved voter's card & permanent registration**

Another reason for the experimental registration is to try out an improved voter's card. The current card is paper sealed in plastic film, but the proposed new cards would be more durable, similar to credit cards and Mozambican identity documents.

The experimental card will have a bar code which can be read by tablet or smartphone. It would have a much clearer photograph and contain other electronic information, including biometric details .

The new card is part of a plan by STAE to move to permanent electoral registration as in many other countries, rather than the present system of doing an entirely new registration for each electoral cycle. This requires a change in the law, and STAE wants to show that it is practical. STAE has already built a more accurate data base of registered voters from 2013-4 and it had hoped to use that data base as the basis for a much simpler update

next year, but that was rejected by the Council of Ministers. Nevertheless, STAE continues to hope for a law change to allow permanent registration.

## **Preparations move forward assuming no new municipalities**

Election commissions are being established in all 11 provinces and in the 53 districts with municipalities, as well as the 53 municipalities themselves. To train new election commission members, six brigades of CNE members and STAE technicians started on 22 August in Tete, Nampula and Inhambane and will go to each district.

The first local elections in 1998 were in 33 municipalities, and this increased to 43 in 2008 and 53 in 2013. Will there be another increase? The issue is part of the on-going negotiations between Renamo and Frelimo. Renamo would like new municipalities in Nampula, Manica, Sofala and Tete, where it has the strongest support and could win some of the new municipalities. Frelimo wants to maintain just the present 53.

CNE spokesperson Cuinica said that the CNE is only planning on these 53 at the moment, but would set up and train new commissions if that was asked for.