

Mozambique political process bulletin

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Problems and protests as 1.2 million register

More than 1.2 million voters were registered in the period 28 June-15 July. This is nearly double the 700,000 predicted by electoral authorities. This was an updating of the register, for those who turned 18 years old this year, who moved, or who had lost their voters card.

The process had significant problems, and has only been reluctantly accepted by national and international observers. Some people were not able to register, and there is some evidence to support Renamo claims that some of its potential voters were excluded.

New registrations total 697,000. In addition, 217,000 people who moved registered at a new location, and 330,000 registered a second time saying they had lost their card.

Meanwhile, the condition of the actual register books (*cadernos*) remains chaotic, and little has been done to resolve problems which became obvious during local elections in November 2003. (See *Bulletin* 29, Dec 2003) Renamo has called for an extra registration period, while civil society has called for an audit of the registers to determine just how serious the problems are. At its meeting on 4 August, the National Election Commission (CNE, *Comissão Nacional de Eleições*) agreed to a detailed check of the computerised register books.

The larger than expected number of people registering for a second time, many saying they had lost their card, may reflect concerns by some voters that even with an older card, the inaccurate registers might prevent them from voting. Thousands were denied the right to vote in local elections last year.

Elections 1-2 December

Mozambique's third multi-party presidential and parliamentary elections will be on Wednesday and Thursday 1 and 2 December. More than 8 million people will be eligible to vote.

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Indeed, a Renamo member of the CNE arrived at a polling station in Maputo with his voters card to find that his name was not on the register.

Registration had been scheduled to run from 15 to 30 June, but had to be delayed because of the late arrival of material from South Africa. This occurred, according to Antonio Carrasco, general director of the Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat (STAE, *Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral*), because "we were not able

to pay the 50 per cent of the agreed cost in advance, as stipulated".

Voter registration was expected to cost \$6 million, paid by the government. Each brigade supervisor was paid 1.5 million meticais (\$63) and the other brigade members 1.3 million each.

2494 registration brigades

There were 2494 registration brigades. Many stayed in one place, such as a school, but in more remote areas they were mobile, moving from place to place. Potential voters must present an identify card or be vouched for by an existing voter. They are then registered in a handwritten register, have their photograph taken, and are immediately issued with a plastic coated voters card with their photo.

National observers from the Electoral Observatory covered 16% of the brigades in nine provinces, while international observers from the Carter Centre covered 5% of brigades, also in nine provinces. There was praise for the quality and training of brigade staff. Both cited significant organisational problems, and only reluctantly considered the process acceptable.

There were widespread reports of brigades being forced to halt registration, sometimes for several days, when they ran out of materials, particularly films. The Carter Center reported that "no cases were observed where voters could not register at all". But this was contradicted by other observers. First, it assumes that would-be voters were willing to come back several days later, sometimes walking a long distance, and not all did so. Second, there were reports of brigades running out of materials in the last few days and simply stopping work, yet there are also many reports of people waiting until the last minute. In Beira, registration brigades had to work until nearly midnight of the final day to cater for everyone in the queues.

In a formal complaint, Renamo talked of 100 people being turned away by a brigade in Angoche, Nampula province, because it had run out of film.

In many areas, mobile brigades were not able to cover all the ground they expected to, because of lack of transport and fuel, delays waiting for material, or simply poor planning. All reports cited a shortage of transport both for materials and for mobile brigades. In Manica province, donkeys and ox carts were used for transport and in some places brigades on foot carried materials on their heads

Julião Fenias of AMODE in Cabo Delgado cites the case of Meluco district, where mobile brigades were using ministries of health and education vehicles, and both were taken back during the registration because of the need to transport a patient and education officials to Pemba..

Observers in several provinces pointed to villages which were not reached. Renamo in Manica, Zambézia and Nampula provinces issued several lists of villages not covered, allegedly with

'Nossas insuficiências' and making the same mistakes

Every discussion of organisational failures is met by the response, even from Mozambicans in STAE and the CNE, of blaming "our insufficiencies" (*nossas insuficiências*). They usually go on to say: "well, this is Mozambique, a very poor country, so you can't expect any more." But for Otilia Aquino, this cannot go on: "We repeat the same mistakes every year, like shortages of registration supplies. They have had five years to check and correct the register, and didn't. Civil society has to start making demands and increase the pressure on them." Aquino is executive director of AMODE and a leading figure in the Electoral Observatory.

several thousand potential voters. In Mopeia, Zambézia, it said there was a group of 6000 people who had never been registered and that it had pointed this out to provincial electoral authorities, but again this year they were not covered. In Manica, the spokesman for the provincial STAE admitted that some villages had been missed out, but said it was not as many as Renamo claimed, reports our correspondent Manuel Ngonhamo.

The shortage of brigades and materials in part reflects an underestimation of how many people would register. STAE estimated around 700,000 and AIM, the Mozambican News Agency, criticised this for being too high and suggested a number closer to 550,000. Renamo commissioned a study which suggested a much higher number; it concluded that there were at least 1.5 million unregistered adults, and to that needed to be added transfers and people with lost cards. STAE had enough materials to register more than 1.2 million people, but even this was an underestimate and the final outcome was halfway between STAE and Renamo.

Disorganisation, or intentional?

In Cabo Delgado, registration brigades failed to reach strong Frelimo areas of Nangade district. In Zambezia brigades failed to reach strong Renamo areas of Milange. Was it simply disorganisation, or was Renamo particularly disadvantaged?

The CNE argues that all plans for placement of brigades were agreed by both Frelimo and Renamo within district and then provincial election commissions, and using local knowledge they could have changed those plans. (See box on Mocimboa da Praia.) Although this is true, Renamo still argues that the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration (STAE, *Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral*) is biased against it, and can manipulate supplies and detailed planning.

Moving brigades in Mocimboa da Praia

Mocimboa da Praia is an example of local knowledge and moving registration brigades for political ends. This was one of the closest and hardest fought local elections, won by Frelimo by just 100 votes on a high turnout.

In general the coastal area is pro-Renamo and the interior pro-Frelimo. In 1999, the registration brigades followed the same pattern as 1994, but in 2003 two brigades were moved from coast to the interior, according to Julião Fenias of AMODE. Renamo objected, and after negotiation consensus was reached on a new map for 2004. But that plan was not implemented this year; instead brigades were sent out in the same pattern as 2003. Again Renamo objected, and four days after registration started, two brigades were moved to the coast, following the consensus map.

And there are some indications that Renamo was worst hit by the problems. Renamo voters tend to be more rural, so the failure of mobile brigades to cover all the villages planned hits Renamo harder. There are indications of more problems in Zambézia, where Renamo is strong, than in other provinces.

There are also questions about the number of brigades. In 1999, there were 1930 brigades, and this was increased by 29% for 2003 and the same number were used this year. In eight provinces STAE increased the number of brigades by a flat 20%. The three exceptions to the rule are Renamo stronghold Sofala, with a 40% increase, and in two Frelimo strongholds, Maputo Province with a 60% increase and Gaza, the only province where Renamo has no MPs, where the number of brigades was doubled (from 130 to 260 brigades). Renamo points out that of the four provinces with about 1.5 million people, Gaza has many more brigades than the other three.

In its observation, the Carter Center found far more mistakes in the computerized registers for Sofala – in 19 of 33 brigades visited there were serious errors in at least one computerized register – than for the Frelimo areas of the southern provinces, where only 2 of 35 brigades had problems with a register.

Renamo spokesman Fernando Mazanga comments: “the people at the top of STAE are too good, too well trained, to make such gross mistakes unintentionally.”

Carrasco remains

Renamo's favourite hate figure is António Carrasco, head of STAE since 1998. Under Renamo pressure, it was agreed that the post of STAE director should

be advertised. But this has not happened, because donors told Renamo to let him stay.

Earlier this year, ambassadors from the European Union “troika” – then Ireland, Netherlands and the European Commission – met Renamo president Afonso Dhlakama who agreed their request that the job not be advertised unless there was a possible candidate, and then convinced him that no one else would take the job if Carrasco was forced out. Since then, criticism of Carrasco has been muted.

There is also a donor view that Carrasco is not the problem, and that many difficulties rest at the door of the computer head, Orlando Comé, whose department may be responsible for some of the ongoing problems with the computerised register as well as for the lack of transparency that surrounds the final counting. In a report earlier this year, UNDP was critical of his unwillingness to accept outside help in upgrading an inadequate and inappropriate system. Both donors and Frelimo members of the CNE have made unsuccessful attempt to dislodge Comé.

Mutual distrust

The distrust between Renamo and Frelimo seems to be growing. At a technical level, Renamo has always accused STAE of being controlled by Frelimo, and has always distrusted the non-transparent counting process. Renamo therefore demanded that it should be able to nominate its own people to be included in STAE. The number of qualified Mozambicans is now increasing rapidly and significant numbers of Renamo supporters now have computer training and have been incorporated into provincial STAEs. Frelimo now says that some of these people are being told to sabotage or manipulate vote counting. (This fear is not totally unfounded. The only known computer-based fraud was attempted by Renamo-supporting data input staff in Nampula in 1999 – See *Bulletin* 24)

This came to a head in the discussion of where the registers should be proof-read and corrected. Renamo insisted this should be done at provincial level, where there are now sufficient trained people and where local people would be better able to spot and correct mistakes. Frelimo insisted it be done in Maputo and that people from provincial STAEs should go to Maputo. Apparently it fears that staff in some provinces are pro-Renamo and will manipulate the registers.

Similarly, distrust seems to be increasing inside the CNE. Frelimo accuses Renamo CNE members of giving long and irrelevant speeches and of failing to show up for committee meetings in order to block and delay decisions. Renamo accused Frelimo members of the CNE of simply submitting proposals, such as for voting by Mozambicans abroad, that have been written in Frelimo headquarters.

Register book chaos continues

After the 2003 local election, the Constitutional Council and international observers from the Carter Centre and the European Union all called for a clean-up of the register books. Thousands of people holding voters cards were unable to vote because they were not on a register. Furthermore, no one seems to know how many people are on the register; last year STAE issued three sets of widely varying figures.

The registers were displayed during the July 2004 registration exercise, and observers reported that nothing had been done to correct the problems. This has caused an outcry. STAE has tried to say the problems are not serious, but observers disagreed and civil society has demanded an independent audit of a sample of the registration books. An audit would show if STAE is correct, and the mistakes are few, or if they are more widespread.

The system has become complex. There have been three registrations – a totally new national registration in 1999 plus updates in 2003 and 2004. People are registered manually as handwritten entries in books, and these are then computerised.

The computerisation process had many errors, and it appears that many of the registration books were never proof-read to check for mistakes. In addition, there are many printing errors – names or birthdates repeated dozens of times, or large blank spaces omitting dozens of voters. Voters numbers are often changed; if a voter has been missed out, then all the subsequent numbers are wrong.

1999 voters still not on computer

After more than four years of data inputting, more than 5% of people who registered in 1999 have still not been put into the computer data base, according to a UNDP report completed on 5 May. By that date, more than 40% of those who registered last year had also not been put in the data base. In all, 1.4 million registration forms are still to be input.

The registration database uses Microsoft Access, which the report considers to be “unsuitable” for such a large database. Furthermore, the locally developed software does not have proper validation routines, which has led to a large number of errors not being caught and corrected before they go into the database.

The UNDP mission was allowed to analyse the entire database for Nampula province, and found significant errors. In 696 registration books, roughly one-quarter of the total, the official total of voters in the book was different from the actual total. In most cases, the official total is larger than the actual number of voters in the book.

Observers also reported many computer-printed register books with unexplained hand-written corrections and changes.

Finally, STAE staff admit that the computerised registration books were put together in haste. Some have covers from other polling stations, some are missing pages, some have groups of pages from other registers. The result was that in 2003 many books or parts of books were sent to the wrong polling stations. People should still be able to consult the original hand-written register, but many of those from 1999 are now missing. The result was many disenfranchised voters last year.

In Mozambique, each polling station can have up to 1000 voters and is normally in the same place that a person registers. After 1000 people have registered, a new book and a new polling station is opened. Thus there are **polling centres**, typically a school, with a **polling station** in each classroom. In 1999, each register book had space for 1000 voters, and thus the simplest situation is a polling station with just two books, the 1999 hand-written register and its computerised partner.

From 2003 books have only 500 spaces, which means many polling stations have two pairs of books. But it can be even worse. There are polling stations in Xai-Xai, for example, that will have eight registers in all – two from 1999, four from 2003, and two from 2004. This occurred because the 1999 register had only a few people and even with additions in 2003 the polling station did not reach 1000 people, so a 2004 book was also opened for the station.

Registration brigades were supposed to carry all of the registers for their area, and people were encouraged to check their registration. Not many people did, but those who tried faced major problems. First, many brigades had the wrong books and the problems of jumbled books noted in local elections had not been solved. In a formal protest, Renamo noted that 17 brigades in Alto Molocuè had the wrong register books. Second, the brigades were not large enough to allow everyone to be able to check their listing, so in some places, for example in Maputo, people were turned away because the brigades gave priority to new registrations.

Until now, STAE and the CNE have argued that observers and the opposition are exaggerating the problem. But at its meeting on 4 August, the CNE finally agreed to a detailed check of the computerised register books. In fact, no one knows

how serious the problem is, and the Carter Center suggested that there should be an independent audit of a sample of registers, probably with party and civil society involvement, to assess the problem and see if STAE is right that it is less serious than alleged. This position was also adopted at a meeting of civil society and parties on 5 August in Maputo, and subsequently by Renamo.

On 11 August the CNE agreed a detailed process to correct the register, which will take up to two months. Each computerised book will be checked, line-by-line, against the handwritten original, corrections will be made, a new book will be printed out, and it will be checked again. Additional staff will be brought from provincial STAE's to assist the revision of books relating to their provinces.

STAE has rejected the demand of the Constitutional Council to create a single unified list and to clean out multiple registrations because, despite having re-registered, a voter might try to vote with an earlier card. Thus cleaning out multiple registrations could disenfranchise more people.

Post it on a website?

"If we have all the data, then we can verify it and we cannot claim fraud. But when STAE keeps everything secret, we must assume fraud," explains Lutero Simango. He calls on STAE to produce a complete list of polling stations, which register books are assigned to each polling station, and how many voters are registered. He accepts that STAE does not have the means to distribute paper copies of such a list, but in a modern Maputo with broadband and internet cafes, why not just post the information on a website, he asks.

Simango organised Renamo's successful computerised parallel count in Beira during the local elections, and says "we need this information to organise a proper monitoring". He stresses a point made by many observers: "Secrecy creates a climate of mistrust."

Mozambique *probably* has 8.1 million voters

Mozambique probably has 8.1 million voters, but it is impossible to be sure, and there are at least four possible numbers of registered voters.

There have been three voters' registrations – in 1999 a new voters roll was created and in 2003 and 2004 it was updated with new registrations (mainly people who turned 18, but also some older people not registered before), those who have moved to a new area (transfers), and those who said they had lost their previous card. Transfers and second cards appear on the register as new entries, and thus these people are listed twice. This table gives the results of the three registrations:

	New	Moved	2nd card	Total
1999	7,099,105			7,099,105
2003	1,308,592	237,652	521,275	2,067,519
2004	697,595	217,516	330,698	1,245,809
TOTAL	9,105,292	455,168	851,973	10,412,433

The table shows that more than 1.3 million people are on the register twice. The National Statistics Institute estimates the current voting age population as 9,511,000, which means that there are more names on the register than voting age adults.

Clearly the new, first registrations give a more accurate picture of the actual number of voters. But even that should be revised, because voters die every year but are not removed from the register. Assuming that 1.5% of voting age adults die each year (probably an underestimate), we calculate the following table:

	New registrations	New reg. less 1.5%/y deaths
1999	7,099,105	6,566,672
2003	1,308,592	1,288,963
2004	697,595	697,595
TOTAL	9,105,292	8,553,230

That suggests the real number of potential voters is 8.6 million.

But even that is probably too high. The 1999 registration covered virtually all of the country and was considered to be well done. Of 8.3 million voting age adults, 7.1 million registered – 85.5%. This is high by world standards but observers consider it valid – elections are important to people, and for many rural Mozambicans, the voters card was their first identity card and it was highly sought after. If we look at the "new registrations" in 2003 and 2004, they total 2 million, slightly more than the number of people who turned 18 in those five years. That suggests that a significant number of people registered for a second time in 2003 and 2004, but

said they were registering for the first time. If we assume that registration levels are the same as in 1999, that is 85.5%, then the actual number of voters on the electoral roll would be 8.1 million. This seems to be the most accurate estimate, and it is the one we will use in estimating turnout in December.

Thus in any discussion of how many voters are registered, there are four possible numbers which can be used:

- 10.4 million names on the registers
- 9.1 million people registered for the first time
- 8.6 million of the 9.1 million are still alive.
- 8.1 million if the same proportion of the population is registered now as in 1999.

To these numbers will need to be added the number of Mozambicans abroad who register.

Does it make a difference? Perhaps the most serious problem is that each province is an “electoral district” (*círculo eleitoral*) with a certain number of seats in parliament, but the law says the number of seats must be “in proportion to the number of voters in each electoral district”. But which number to use – the total number of names, the new registrations, or some other combination taking account of transfers? In local elections last year, STAE and CNE sometimes used the first figure and sometimes used the second, in a confusing and inconsistent way.

Confusion of different official figures caused chaos in local elections. The number of municipal assembly seats is based on the number of registered voters; the CNE published one list of seats on 20 August and 21 October, then changed many of the numbers of seats when it announced

results on 4 December. This was reversed by the Constitutional Council, who said it was too late after the election to change the number of seats and that the 20 August figures should be used.

But it does not permit extra voting. Everyone who votes has to dip their right index finger in indelible ink, so that they cannot vote again. So there is no advantage in having extra voters cards. There are claims of both parties trying to obtain extra voters cards, but who would use them? Turnout in 1999 was nearly 75%, so there are not many non-voters around who could be paid to vote, and there is always the danger that they would be recognised by polling agents as not being the named person.

But to most inside and outside observers, it is bizarre that CNE and STAE don't even know how many people are registered.

How many voters in Xai-Xai?

The 19 May bi-election in Xai-Xai shows some of the registration problems. According to the published results, 55,067 people were registered and eligible to vote. But before the election, STAE published a list of registration books for the election with a total of 74,570 names. What happened to the other 19,503 people?

The *Bulletin* noted this problem in our report of the local election (*MPPB* 29, Dec 2003). We noted that there were **three** different registration figures:

- 1) that announced officially on 20 August 2003,
- 2) that announced with the results, and
- 3) the sum of the names in all 1999 and 2003 registration books.

Often all three numbers are different, in some cases by quite wide margins. The first number was usually close to the number of people in the 1999 register plus the number of *new* registrations in 2003, excluding lost cards and transfers. The second number was usually close to one of the other two, but in no consistent way.

In Xai-Xai this year, the 74,570 reported by STAE is the same as the number we reported last year as the number in all the registration books, so that is consistent. But the Carter Center took a closer look at the list of books. At the 84 polling stations there are 119 register books (*cadernos*) listed, but Carter found that there really only 106 books and that the numbers of 13 of the books were repeated.

What seems to have happened is that registration brigades used the same registration books in two places (an issue raised again this year both by Renamo and by international observers). Normally, electors go to vote where they registered, and thus the same register is supposed to serve two different polling stations. Apparently two copies of the computerised register book were printed, with one copy going to each of the two polling stations.

Demands for a single, clean list

“Although the voting process was done on the basis of the computerised registration list, the handwritten books were also used. In future, this practice must be avoided and single, updated registration book must be used”

Constitutional Council ruling on the 2003 local elections, 14 January 2004.

“The lack of a single reliable voter list remains a matter of concern”.

EU Observation Mission report, 2003

“The use of various versions of the voters list in polling stations created mistrust and confusion and it is recommended that there shall be only one unified, nation-wide, computerised voters list in future.”

EU Observer Mission final report, 2004

“It is hoped that election authorities [will] establish a single consolidated voters roll.”

Carter Centre observation report, 2003

But the hand written original, which is supposed to be available for checking to deal with the common errors in the computerised register, can only go to one of the two polling stations.

But the double counting of books seems to account for fewer than 7000 voters whose names seem to appear twice. Who are the other 12,000 people? It seems likely that this level of confusion is repeated across the country.

Foreign residents may vote

Mozambicans living abroad in nine countries will have the chance to register and perhaps vote, the CNE decided on 21 July. The decision was by majority vote – the first time this year that the CNE has not acted by consensus – with Renamo voting against. Renamo has appealed the decision to the Constitutional Council.

Registration will take place between 6 and 25 September at Mozambican embassies and consulates in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Swaziland, Malawi, Tanzania and Kenya in Africa and Portugal and Germany in Europe. CNE spokesman Filipe Mandlate said that \$400,000 for the exercise is already available.

The CNE will still have to decide if Mozambicans abroad can vote. They were able to register in 1997 but not able to vote in 1999; since then they have not been able to register.

If the CNE decides conditions exist for Mozambicans abroad to vote, then the law gives 2 of the 250 parliament seats to those abroad, one for Africa and one for the rest of the world. The foreign ministry estimates that there are 226,000 Mozam-

Watched over by a candidate

Registration materials are often locked up in the local school overnight, but in Namarroi district, Renamo objected, on the grounds that the school had a prominent picture of Armando Guebuza, the Frelimo presidential candidate.

bicans living in these nine countries.

For registration (law 18/2002) and voting (law 7/2004), the CNE must “verify that there are the necessary material conditions and mechanisms to control, accompany and monitor” the process. In its protest to the Constitutional Council, Renamo cited two grounds to object.

One was narrow and technical, namely that the law only allows the CNE to request registrations once a year, and that it failed to include foreign registration in its request to the Council of Ministers for the recently completed national registration; it cannot go to the Council of Ministers a second time this year.

But the main argument was that no evidence was presented to the CNE that the registration process could actually be monitored, so it could not actually “verify” that conditions were in place. Diplomatic postings in many countries are political appointments, and registration will take place in embassies and be partly carried out by embassy staff, nearly all of whom will be linked to Frelimo. Renamo will have difficulty on very short notice to organise 28 sets of monitors; it has no money to transport people abroad, and no time to find people in the countries where registration will take place.

Comment

Renamo becomes more professional

In the past observers and the *Bulletin* have criticised Renamo for failing to provide evidence to back up its complaints. This year, Renamo has responded to its critics. On 19 July Renamo submitted a complaint to the CNE about registration problems, and it was an impressive book containing 161 pages of copies of complaints made at local level, involving more than 300 registration brigades.

Each complaint was detailed, giving brigade numbers, locations, registration book numbers, dates and so on. In Nampula, Renamo had even created a complaint (*reclamação*) form for its party agents to use. Most of the complaints were hand-written but clear and concise. Renamo press spokesman Fernando Mazanga said on 6 August that not one of the complaints to district and provincial electoral commissions had been responded to.

The CNE did not consider the complaint because it said Renamo had to go through district and provincial level first. This is technically correct, but it missed two points. First, these were copies of the proper local protests that had not been responded to. Second, for the first time Renamo had collected and documented a pattern of at least

disorganisation which needed to be taken seriously at national level.

The change reflects a much more professional approach to this election than in the past. Renamo announced its election office on 3 August and for the first time it is headed by a senior academic, Eduardo Namburete, who has brought with him some of his academic colleagues. Luterio Simango is head of logistics; he organised the best run local election campaign on the opposition side for his brother Davis Simango in Beira, and also organised an excellent computerised parallel count there.

The final change was the removal of Francisco Marcelino, usually known by his nom-de-guerre of José de Castro, as Renamo vice-president of the CNE, where he had served since 1994. His press conferences sometimes suggested he did not

understand some of the more complex electoral processes and he tended to prefer walk-outs and boycotts. He is replaced by Raimundo Samunge, a trusted advisor of Renamo president Afonso Dhlakama, who is likely to follow the process more closely and keep up the detailed pressure on Frelimo rather than walk out. *jh*

Renamo harassed in Tete -- again

Renamo reports that its election monitors have been harassed were confirmed by the *Bulletin* correspondent in Tete, Estêvão Lichowa. He reports that in Magoe district, in the far west of the province, four houses of Renamo members were destroyed by Frelimo party supporters and that Renamo party workers were stopped from accompanying the registration process in Frelimo brigades. In Chifunde district, in the north of the province, our correspondent reports that the Renamo delegate was detained by the administrator for flying the Renamo flag. In both districts, this was enough to frighten Renamo and reduce the number of party monitors accompanying the registration process, he reports.

Renamo claimed on 5 July that its party monitors had been expelled from Changara and Chifunde districts, and that monitors in Magoe, Songo and Zobue district had been beaten.

Tete was the one place where Frelimo violence against Renamo was confirmed in the 1999 national elections. The *Mozambique Peace Process Bulletin* 24 (Jan 2000) reported that Renamo had been expelled from Changara district and there were no Renamo monitors in polling stations in that district. Without opposition monitors present, there were indications of ballot box stuffing in Changara in 1999. There were also indications of tampering with results sheets in Chifunde in that year.

Renamo party workers have also been attacked in the north of Cabo Delgado province. In an incident in Muidumbe district, our correspondent reports that local people expelled Renamo representatives. Muidumbe on the Mueda plateau was the location of Frelimo's "central base" during the liberation war and has always been vociferously pro-Frelimo. In the 1994 election, Renamo head Afonso Dhlakama was stoned when he appeared here.

Renamo also reports harassment in Mueda and Nangade districts in northern Cabo Delgado, but this has not been confirmed.

Looking toward the December election

Mozambique's third multi-party presidential and parliamentary elections will be Wednesday and Thursday 1 and 2 December. Formal campaigning only begins on 17 October, but both major parties have opened their elections offices and begun campaigning in earnest.

Elections will be carried out in a manner very similar to previous elections. But there are two significant changes. After widespread complaints about Frelimo using government vehicles and facilities, there is now a ban on the use by a party of any government goods or property ("*bens*"). And polling station staff, police and journalists can now vote at any polling station; in past years they had been effectively disenfranchised because they were only allowed to vote at the polling station where they were on the register. (For more details of election law changes, see the next page.)

But the law has not made any changes to the non-transparent and confusing counting process at national level which takes so long that it has never met the legal deadline. So it seems unlikely that final results will be available by 17 December.

But approximate results will be known much earlier. Provincial results are supposed to be announced within a week (although some of those, as well, will probably be late). Both major parties are doing their own counts and will have reasonably accurate results within two days. Radio Mozambique did a good parallel count of the local elections, using its journalists, and something similar is expected this year.

The total cost of presidential and parliamentary elections will be \$21.5 million. The European Union has provided 12 million Euros (now about \$14 mn) and UNDP will provide \$1 million. The rest of the money will come from the government budget. The EU has paid for past elections and controlled the

money very tightly; this time the money was provided as special budget support, handed over in June. Thus all funding for the election this year (other than the UNDP money) is part of the government budget and is controlled directly by government and not by the donor community.

Observation and parallel count

There will again be both national and international observation. The Electoral Observatory has now expanded to six local NGOs, including all of those active in election observation. It will have up to 2500 national observers and will also do a sample count of the presidential election.

The sample count, known as a "quick count" or "parallel vote tabulation" (PVT), will involve

Special issues of *Bulletin* in December

The *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin* will have more than 50 correspondents throughout the country in November and December and will report in detail on the campaign and election. As was done with the local elections, there will be special reports on a frequent basis, sometimes daily. Reports will be in English and on e-mail only. If you wish to be added to the list, just send a note to the editor on j.hanlon@open.ac.uk.

Regular editions of the *Bulletin* in English and Portuguese are also available electronically.

collecting results from several hundred polling stations or polling centres selected to give an accurate national picture. The Observatory did full counts for several municipalities and sample counts for some others in the local elections last year, which provided an accurate prediction of the results. There was some opposition to the process last year, particularly from Frelimo, but that opposition has evaporated after the experience of the local elections. In effect, the Observatory results served to validate the accuracy of the official count. And the Observatory did not publish its results before the full

official results were announced, so the CNE did not see it as competition.

Switzerland, Sweden, Britain and the Netherlands have contributed \$900,000 to the Observatory for civic education, conflict management, observation and the PVT. Separately (as always) the United States is also contributing \$500,000 to the PVT.

International observation will include the Carter Center and probably the European Union. The EU wants to sign a memorandum of understanding with the CNE and the government on observation. In a draft submitted to the CNE in early August, the EU demanded more access to the final counting and tabulation process in the CNE and STAE offices in Maputo. Observers and press were excluded from those areas in 2003, but the EU says that without access, its observation will not be useful. The EU in Brussels has still not agreed to a Mozambique observation, and it could still decide not to have one.

The Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) is opening an office in Maputo with \$535,000 from Britain and Switzerland for a programme involving conflict prevention and attempts to increase transparency.

In the 1999 national elections, there were 2000 national observers and 300 foreign observers.

New Election law: Similar to 1999 & 2003 ...

The new election law (Lei no 7/2004 de 17 de Junho) is almost identical to the law for the 1999 national elections (4/99) and very similar to that for last year's local elections (19/2002).

The law retains the 5% threshold for parties to enter parliament -- a party or coalition must obtain at least 5% of the national vote to have MPs elected. Thus a party which wins enough votes to gain a seat in one province, such as Zambezia, will not be given that seat unless it has more than 5% of the total national vote.

... with some improvements ...

Eight significant changes have been introduced, all responding to problems in previous elections:

- Polling station staff, police and journalists can now vote at any polling station. Previously voters could

only vote at the polling station where they were on the register, which disenfranchised most polling staff.

- Following complaints from the opposition and observers about Frelimo using government vehicles and facilities, there is now a ban on the use by a party of any goods or property ("*bens*") of central government, local government, or state owned or controlled companies. (This does not, of course, apply to things available to all, such as the use of public halls.)

- Following the omission of some party symbols from ballot papers last year, parties now have the right to check proof copies of the ballot paper before printing.

- Party polling station agents (*delegados de candidaturas*) will receive their credential from the district election commission, ending a confusion in previous elections.

- Counting will still be done at provincial level, but results will also be published district-by-district.

- Voting can no longer be extended for a third day.

Observers cannot talk to voters within 300 m of a polling station

The law clarifies previously confused rules about limits to activities near polling stations. Now, within 300 metres of a polling station, no voter can say who they voted for or planned to vote for. Observers and journalists are not allowed to talk to voters within this area. Also, within 300 meters of the polling station there can be no campaign posters or material, and no one is allowed to display a party symbol or other political symbol, nor wear a party t-shirt or party cloth (*capulana*).

- In an attempt to reduce the large number of errors made by tired polling stations staff, on the formal results sheets compiled after the count ("*actas*" and "*editais*") the number of votes gained by each candidate must be written in both figures and words.
- In the event of other documents being missing, the copies of *actas* and *editais* given to party polling station agents can be used for the count. (This

follows an incident in Beira in the 2003 local elections, in which records from several polling stations disappeared, and Frelimo refused to allow the copies of *actas* to be used.)

Four changes introduced last year for local elections are maintained:

- Exit polls are effectively banned. No opinion polls can be published between the start of the campaign and the declaration of results.
- Because some party polling station agents (*delegados de candidaturas*) are illiterate, they were not able to write down accurately the results after the count, for use by parties for their own parallel count. Now *delegados* in each polling station are given a copy of the official summary sheet (*edital*) and formal minutes (*acta*) to take back to their party.
- At least two of the five polling station staff must speak the local language.
- Polling station staff are hired in a public competition and parties are allowed to suggest candidates.

Election Calendar

The election calendar is set by law, and is:

- 2 October: deadline for presidential nominations; each presidential candidate must submit 10,000 signatures and other required documents to the Constitutional Council.
- 7 October: deadline for parliamentary nominations which must be submitted to the National Election Commission (CNE); requiring certificate of no criminal record plus various other documents for each candidate.
- 16 October: list of candidates published by CNE
- 17 October - 28 November: official electoral campaign; gives parties and candidates extra rights. No opinion polls.
- 1 November: CNE must publish list of all polling stations
- 10 November: deadline for parties and candidates to submit names of polling station agents (*delegados*), and to which polling station they are to be assigned, to the district election commission.
- 29, 30 November: quiet period, no campaigning allowed
- 1,2 December: election**
- 2 December into morning of 3 December: count in polling station
- 4 December: all polling station summary sheets (*editais*), minutes (*actas*) and spoiled and protested ballot papers must be submitted to the provincial election commission. Copies of *editais* and spoiled and protested ballot papers then go to CNE.
- 9 December: deadline for publication of provincial results.
- 17 December: deadline for publication of national results by CNE, with copies submitted to the Constitutional Council for verification.

There is no deadline for action by the Constitutional Council. But after the validation and proclamation of the results by the Constitutional Council, the calendar is:

- Within 2 days of proclamation, order publication in *Boletim da República*.
- Within 15 days of publication, new parliament opens.
- Within 8 days of parliament opening, new President is inaugurated.

Deadlines for registration of observers and journalists remain to be defined by the CNE.

... but many problems remain over seats & counts

Four serious problems in past electoral laws have not been resolved.

- First, the method for allocating the number of parliamentary seats to each province has not been changed and remains arithmetically wrong; there are supposed to be 250 seats, but when the method was used in 1999 it led to the allocation of 251 seats, and one seat had to be arbitrarily taken away from one province to bring the number back down to 250.
- Second, all spoiled ballot papers (*nulos*) must be sent to the National Election Commission in Maputo and rechecked. In 1999, the CNE reassessed 500,000 ballot papers and accepted 130,000 as valid and added them to the results. There simply is not enough time to recheck that many ballot papers, and results have been late in every previous election because of this. It has often been suggested that this rechecking could be done at provincial level.
- Third, with the exception that the number of votes be given in both figures and words, no change has been made in procedures for polling station staff to complete *editais*. Staff are tired after two days of voting and then an all-night count, and many mistakes are made. In 1999, 6.6% of presidential *editais* and 8.7% of parliamentary *editais* were excluded from the final count because of errors which could not be resolved. (The CNE could still issue regulations and design a better *edital* form, but this is not set out in the law.)
- Fourth, there are no rules on the transparent development, timely testing, and publication of computer software used in the tabulation in Maputo.

Renamo has often complained about the use of computers, and the secrecy makes tampering possible. Although parallel counts provide some

check, the law does not require the publication of clear polling station by polling station results, making comparisons harder.

Results will be delayed again this year

Although the law requires the CNE to publish results by 17 December, the results will surely be delayed, as they were in 1999 and 2003. Parliament (AR), the CNE and STAE have all failed to tackle the fundamental problems which caused the delays. There are five key problems: errors in editais, reconsideration of invalid votes (*nulos*), counting procedure in the CNE, dealing with protests, and the size of the CNE.

EDITAIS: In 1999, nearly one-fifth of the summary results sheets (*editais*) submitted by polling stations contained errors. Mistakes are made by tired polling station staff finishing the count in the early hours of the morning, after two nights with little sleep. Some of these errors are simple, for example listing the parties in the order of number of votes, instead of in the order they appeared on the ballot paper, or columns which do not add up correctly. These are resolved at provincial level.

But some errors have no obvious resolution, and there is no mechanism for recounts. These editais are often sent on to the CNE at national level. In 1999 the CNE had to look at nearly 2000 editais. The CNE corrected and included 297 presidential editais but it rejected and excluded 550 – 6.6% of all polling stations. For the parliamentary election, the CNE corrected and accepted 300 editais but rejected and excluded 727 – more than 8.7% of polling stations. That means the votes of more than 300,000 people were not counted in each of the presidential and parliamentary elections, because of errors in the editais. This provoked a Renamo walkout of the CNE on 22 December 1999.

Two changes have been made which will slightly reduce the error rate: all numbers must be written in both words and figures, and polling station staff now have calculators. Changes in the design of the edital and changes to the law allowing recounts would be required to really reduce the number of errors, but these changes have not been made. So we can expect more than 1000 editais to be passed to the CNE for reconsideration, causing an unexpected delay in the counting process.

NULOS: In past elections, about 8% of all ballot papers have been ruled invalid by polling station staff, usually because of multiple marks or because the X or fingerprint overlaps two candidates. The law requires that every invalid ballot paper (*nulo*) be reconsidered in Maputo. In 1999, the CNE

reconsidered 194,345 presidential votes and accepted 30% of them as valid -- that is, it decided that even with multiple or inaccurate marks, the will of the voter was clear. It reconsidered 309,139 parliamentary votes, and accepted 23% as valid. This process is carried out by STAE under the supervision of CNE members from both parties, but it remains time consuming to ship to Maputo and reprocess more than 500,000 ballot papers. A similar number can be expected this year.

COUNTING: The law says that provincial election commissions should add up the editais, and that the role of the CNE is simply to add the revalidated *nulos* and declare a result. Reconsideration of editais passed on from provincial level is not even mentioned in the law. Furthermore, copies of all editais are faxed to the CNE, which does its own alternative count to compare to that done at provincial level. There is no clear procedure for bringing together the two counts and the reconsidered editais and *nulos*. In both 1994 and 1999 this generated considerable delays, confusion and Renamo walkouts, and is sure to create delays and conflict this year.

PROTESTS: Protests and complaints should be dealt with first at local level and only later passed to national CNE level. But the failure to respond to Renamo protests at local level this year underlines the lack of systems to do this. In the 2003 local elections, the CNE did not develop a smooth or consistent way of dealing with complaints. This means that consideration of each protest becomes very time consuming.

CNE SIZE: The current CNE has 19 members and many want to speak in every discussion. This means that even the simplest issue can take several hours to decide. CNE President Litsure tries to reach consensus, which means a discussion can go on all day. If a vote is taken, voting is always along party lines, and Frelimo has a majority. This polarisation means that Renamo feels its protests are never given fair consideration. This, in turn, increases tension and distrust, which generates either longer Renamo speeches or Renamo absences, which further slows the process.

Taken together, this suggests it will be impossible for the CNE to reach an agreed and accurate result by 17 December, and that a delay until after Christmas is likely.

In London too

Invalid ballot papers are not just a problem in developing countries. Britain uses ballot papers similar to Mozambique. In municipal elections in London in June this year, more than 500,000 ballot papers were invalid. That was 7% of the total, or about the same level as Mozambique.

'Pre-campaign' begins

All the parties have started campaigning, in what in Mozambique tends to be called the "pre-campaign" as it comes before the 43-day official campaign period. Frelimo presidential candidate Armando Guebuza has already visited most districts at least twice. Frelimo also benefits from more extensive and favourable coverage in the state-owned daily *Notícias*, which is only bound by balance and fairness rules during the official campaign.

In local elections, Renamo only won four cities, many fewer than expected. Renamo officials were shocked, and admit now to having been overconfident, expecting people who voted for them in 1999 to also vote for them in local elections. In fact, Renamo's vote was strong only in those areas, such as Beira, where it had a strong campaign and was able to mobilise its supporters to actually go to the polling stations. Frelimo, on the other hand, showed that it had the organisation necessary to ensure its core vote.

Renamo has started its campaign much more slowly, and seems short of money. This year, in contrast to 1999, there is no donor fund for the political parties.

Domingos to stand

Raul Domingos and his Party for Peace, Democracy and Development (PDD, *Partido para a Paz, Democracia e Desenvolvimento*) will stand in the general elections, Domingos announced on 21 July.

Domingos, number two in Renamo until he was expelled, could take votes away from Dhlakama in the presidential contest. Domingos' group stood as IPADE in last year's local elections. It did worse than expected, only winning a single seat in Beira and one in Dondo, both Renamo strongholds, taking 3% and 6% of the vote. The 1999 race was close, with Chissano gaining only 52% of the vote, so Domingos' candidacy could be a boost for the Frelimo candidate, Armando Guebuza.

Looking back at local elections

Local elections in 33 municipalities on 19 November 2003 gave Frelimo victory in 28 cities and towns, Renamo victory in four (Beira, Nacala, Ilha de Moçambique and Angoche), and in Marromeu a Renamo president (mayor) and a municipal assembly controlled by Frelimo. The *Bulletin* estimated turnout at 28%, ranging from a low of 15% in Nampula to highs of 47% in Moatize and 46% in Mocimboa da Praia (which was one of the closest and probably the most intensely fought contest).

This was the second municipal election. Renamo boycotted the first elections in 1998, which means this is the first time Renamo has ever had real governing power and responsibility.

There were more than 900 independent domestic observers and 150 foreign observers who had high praise for the election day. The largest foreign observer group, the European Union, said "election day was an example of good electoral management and professional performance by polling station officers during the voting and counting." The Carter Center reported "a generally well conducted election day".

But both criticised the tabulation process at CNE level, which was seen as confused, non-transparent, and subject to errors. The EU said that the CNE and STAE were inefficient, non-transparent, and sometimes misinterpreted the election laws. The Carter Center cited delays, errors and "a general lack of public transparency". Both were highly critical of the electoral registers.

The results in terms of which parties won in each city were judged as correct because they corresponded to parallel counts done by observers, the parties, and Radio Moçambique. But the details could not be confirmed or verified; indeed, it was possible to show that mistakes had been made.

Both Carter and the EU complained of administrative obstruction which gave them less

freedom of movement and less access than in earlier elections.

The EU report is on:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/mozambique/

while the Carter Center report is on

<http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1645.pdf>

Constitutional Council revised results & rejected CNE changes

The CNE and STAE found it impossible to get a correct set of results. The first results of the 19 November election were posted on 4 December. Although riddled with obvious errors, this was submitted to the Constitutional Council. A revised set of results was published on 11 December, after which further corrections were made and a new set of results submitted to the Constitutional Council on 18 December. (This version was published in *MPPB* 29.) Even that had mistakes, and the Constitutional Council made corrections to the final results.

In the case of Manhiça, the CNE and STAE made a mistake in using the d'Hondt method to distribute seats in the municipal assembly, giving 15 to Frelimo and 2 to Renamo. The Constitutional Council redid the calculation and gave 16 to Frelimo and 1 to Renamo. The CNE also made mistakes in the lists of winning candidates taken from party lists.

But the biggest slap in the face to the CNE was a decision to reject an attempt to correct the number of seats in the assemblies of eight municipalities. The number of seats is based on the number of registered voters. On 20 August, the CNE published numbers of seats in each of the 33 municipalities. But in its various versions of the results, it changed the numbers of registered voters, and in a decision on 6 December, it changed the number of seats of 8 cities. The Constitutional Council ruled that the CNE could not change the number of seats *after* the election, and that the list published on 20 August should stand, even if it was wrong.

The final, correct set of results was announced by the Constitutional Council on 14 January and published in *Boletim da República* on 26 January.

Slow start for new councils

New presidents (mayors) elected last year have made a relatively slow start in the first months of the new terms, mainly due to the lack of a proper handover from the old administrations. Where presidents have been re-elected, administration has continued much as.

The main exception is Nacala, which was widely seen as the best run municipality in the 1998-2003 period. The new Renamo mayor, Manuel dos Santos, has kept most of the vereadores from the previous administration, which ensured a smooth handover, but resulted in a major political backlash from both parties. Renamo members were outraged, saying that all high officials should be replaced and the jobs given to Renamo members. Manuel dos Santos came under intense pressure from his own party, but he resisted, saying he wanted to keep vereadores who had shown they could do a good job. Precisely those vereadores came under intense pressure from Frelimo, who said they should quit and not help a Renamo president succeed. But they, too, have largely decided to stay. Thus, despite pressure from both parties, dos Santos and his vereadores have put the good of the city over party demands.

Marromeu is also an exception. It is the only city with a Renamo president and a Frelimo majority (of 1) in the assembly, but Frelimo and Renamo have proved to be cooperative. This may reflect that fact that Marromeu is a small and isolated town, and the president and senior assembly members all work for the local sugar company.

But these have been the exceptions. Even where a new Frelimo president is taking over from an old one, there has been no proper handover and no good will. Outgoing Frelimo presidents are angry at having been replaced by their own party, and offered no handovers, and indeed sometimes even sabotaged the transition. In one city, the outgoing president stripped the official president's house, and the incoming president has not yet been able to move in. In some places, outgoing vereadores have not returned their official cars.

Maps of past elections

Excellent maps of 1994, 1999 and 2003 elections results are available on the website of Cruzeiro do Sul (Southern Cross):
http://www.iid.org.mz/html/6__eleicoes_94_99.html

Meanwhile, the new Frelimo presidents are sweeping away the old vereadores and appointing mainly new ones, and starting from scratch.

Perhaps the most difficult transition has been in Beira. The most serious problem is that the funding from a World Bank infrastructure programme which had been paying for important major works has been suspended because of alleged corruption by the previous, Frelimo, administration. Renamo is angry, alleging that the only time World Bank money has been halted due to Frelimo corruption is when Renamo is taking over.

Meanwhile, Renamo President Davis Simango is facing demands from the Renamo dominated assembly for salary increases and other benefits. This continues a sad history; in the previous five years, Beira saw intense battles between the Frelimo president and the Frelimo assembly.

Finally, in both Beira and Marromeu, the Renamo president, as expected, has replaced the old neighbourhood secretaries. These are traditionally political appointments, and they served as both the lowest level of city administration and as local Frelimo secretaries. In Beira the issue has been compounded by a dispute as to whether the offices of the secretaries belong to the city or to Frelimo. But Frelimo's claim to the buildings is a tacit acceptance that neighbourhood secretaries are party, and not city, workers.

First bi-election

There is again one woman mayor, after the country's first bi-election. The mayor (president) of Xai-Xai died soon after being elected in November. The bi-election was held on 19 May, and Rita Muianga of Frelimo was elected with 95% of the vote. Renamo holds only one seat on the city assembly, in this staunchly Frelimo area. Turnout was 27%, average for the local elections but down on the 38% in November.

In the 1998-2003 period there had been one woman mayor, in nearby Manhiça, but she was not reelected by Frelimo and no women were elected as presidents in November.

Municipal structure

The 33 municipalities have almost the same structure as central government, with the same presidential system. Every five years, a municipal president and municipal assembly are elected. The municipal president then chooses local ministers, known as *vereadores*, who administer the various departments of the municipality.