

## What happened to women candidates?

**Claim:** Did Zimbabwe suffer a fall in women candidates in 2023?

A report by local news website Newswire published on June 30 2023 provided a statistical breakdown of women participation from the nomination lists published by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission. Statements have also been published by women's rights groups registering their concern over this decline in women's representation citing unequal access to resources as one of the factors deterring women's participation in this election.

The numbers from the nomination process show a regression at all levels of candidature compared to statistics recorded in 2018.

### Is this true or false?

Verdict: True

### What are the numbers at the different levels of candidacy?

#### Presidential

There is one woman running for the presidential seat, a significant decline from four who ran in 2018.

#### National Assembly

Overall, 70 women are contesting for National Assembly seats, this represents 11% of the 637 prospective candidates.

In the 2018 general elections, women constituted 14.4% of the 1648 national assembly candidates.

#### Local authority

In the local authority elections, 665 women will be contesting as candidates against 3940 men. Overall, 14% of the candidates in this election are women compared to 17% in the previous election.

The contesting political parties listed 1336 women who will be vying for the 30% local government quota seats. The quota system guarantees women 561 seats in Council which translates to at least 23% of the 1570 available seats.

#### Conclusion

The statistics from the ZEC nomination figures show that there has been a decline in women's participation as candidates in the 2023 election. The prevailing trend violates section 17, 56 and 80 of the Constitution which call for gender equality in all sectors including politics.

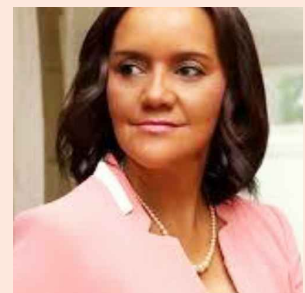
#### Sources

<https://www.zec.org.zw/download/nomination-court-results/>

*ZEC nomination report by the numbers: ZANU PF uncontested in 92 wards, 19 parties in the race, women candidate numbers fall*

## Zimbabwe women presidential candidates

On July 19, 2023, Elisabeth Valerio who is the leader of the United Zimbabwe Alliance (UZA), became the first female presidential candidate for the August 23, 2023 general elections after winning her nomination case at the High Court. The court approved her bid to contest the poll, ruling that she was not responsible for the bureaucratic delays in the transfer of her nomination fees to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC).



Elisabeth Valerio - United Zimbabwe Alliance (UZA)

Meanwhile, the Electoral Court is also scheduled to hear on July 24 an appeal by Linda Masarira against the rejection of her candidacy by ZEC over a dispute over nomination fees. Masarira is the leader of the Labour, Economists and African Democrats (LEAD).



Linda Masarira - Labour, Economists and African Democrats (LEAD)

## Who contested the 2018 elections?

In 2018, four women candidates contested for the presidential seat. These were:



Joice Mujuru - People's Rainbow Coalition (PRC)



Thokozani Khupe - Movement for Democratic Change - Tsvangirai (MDC-T)



Melbah Dzapasi - #1980 Freedom Movement Zimbabwe



Violet Mariyacha - United Democratic Movement (UDM)

### Sources:

Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC)

## Here are some election related cases before the courts:

• On 19 July, 2023 United Zimbabwe Alliance (UZA) president Elisabeth Valerio won her appeal against ZEC's decision to reject her nomination papers. She will thus be added to the list of nominees vying for the office of the President. (EC2/23)

• Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) has sued 41 candidates who filed nomination papers as members of the party. Twenty of these candidates filed for National Assembly seats while the other 21 individuals filed for local authority seats. (EC3/2023)

• Independent Presidential candidate Saviour Kasukuwere is back on the ballot paper after his legal team successfully appealed the nullification of his nomination at the Supreme Court on 13 July, 2023. The appeal retains Kasukuwere as a presidential candidate until the Supreme Court rules otherwise. (SC387/2023)

• The Electoral Court will on 19 July 2023 hear applications filed by Zanu-PF activists seeking to have all Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) MP candidates in Bulawayo disqualified from the August 23 general elections. (EC02/2023)

• Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) has approached the High Court to challenge attempts by police to block a rally meant to launch the party's August 23 election campaign amid charges that the law enforcement agency is taking sides in the contest.

A Bulawayo-based media organisation Asakhe Online filed an urgent chamber application on 7 July, 2023 with the High Court seeking permission to livestream cases that are pending before the court concerning challenges to the acceptance of nomination papers of various candidates in the Nomination Court.

### Sources

Veritas

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights

Zimbabwe National NGO Forum

# No High Court ruling yet on MDC-T candidates

**Claim:** Zimbabwe opposition leader Douglas Mwonozora's MDC-T party has lost a High Court case against the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) to accept the registration of 87 candidates, according to some local media reports on Friday, July 21.

In the court case, the MDC T is contesting the rejection of 87 of its members as candidates for Zimbabwe's Parliamentary National Assembly in elections due on August 23 over disputes on their nomination papers.

### Is this true or false?

**Verdict:** False.

The High Court has not delivered a ruling.

### Conclusion

Reports that the case was dismissed are false, as the High Court simply ordered MDC-T's aspiring candidates and ZEC to file written affidavits for the court's consideration. Such an order does not amount to a dismissal of a case.

The case is still scheduled to continue next week, with judgment expected by next Wednesday, July 26, according to Lovemore Madhuku, MDC-T's lawyer in this case.

# Who can use Zimbabwe's postal voting system?

On July 12, 2023 Zimbabwe political movement Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) wrote to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) seeking clarity over how the poll management authority intended to roll out its postal voting exercise among members of the uniformed forces amid fears of double voting, intimidation and a violation of secrecy of the ballot.

**This ZimFact Factsheet focuses on some key questions around the process.**

## What is postal voting?

Postal voting is provided for under Section 71 of the Electoral Act, which states that registered voters who on polling day will be unable to vote at their polling stations because they will be on official duty are eligible for postal voting.

## Persons who may vote by post

Section 72 of the Electoral Act states that, where an election is to be held in a constituency, a person who is registered as a voter on the roll for that constituency shall be entitled to vote by post in terms of this Part if, on all polling days in the election, he or she will be-

- (a) on duty as a member of a disciplined force or as an electoral officer; or
- (b) on duty in the service of the Government outside Zimbabwe; or
- (c) outside Zimbabwe as the spouse of a person referred to in paragraph (b); and so unable to vote at a polling station in the constituency.

## Applications for Postal Vote - What does the law say?

Section 73 of the Electoral Act states that applications for postal votes are made to Zimbabwe Electoral Commission's (ZEC) Chief Elections Officer on a prescribed form.

Applications for postal votes must be sent to ZEC no later than two weeks after nomination day [section 73(2)(c) of the Electoral Act].

An application for a postal ballot paper shall be in the prescribed form; and signed by the applicant and accompanied by a certified copy of the voter's national registration certificate; and except in the case where the application is submitted (individually or as part of a batch of such applications) by a commanding officer on behalf of a member of a disciplined force.

The applicant must also submit a letter from the applicant's head of Ministry, head of department or head of station; or the head of Zimbabwe's Embassy or diplomatic or consular mission in the foreign State where the applicant is employed; stating the capacity in which the applicant is employed by the Government and where the applicant will be employed on polling day or polling days, as the case may be, in the election.

## Postal voting logistics

The Chief Electoral Officer must send a postal ballot paper for each election plus envelopes marked with the applicant's name, voter registration number and the polling station on whose roll the applicant is registered if ZEC is satisfied that a person who has applied for a postal vote is entitled to one.

Postal voters vote by filling in their ballot papers in the same way as voters at polling stations - by putting an X opposite the candidates of their choice.

They must then seal the ballot papers into their covering envelopes and have them sent back to ZEC at least 14 days before polling in the election, to give ZEC time to have them distributed to polling stations.

## Offences in relation to postal votes

A person who attempts to induce any other person to obtain a postal ballot paper with the intention of influencing him or her by bribery or intimidation to record his or her vote in favour of a particular candidate shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a fine not exceeding level six or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

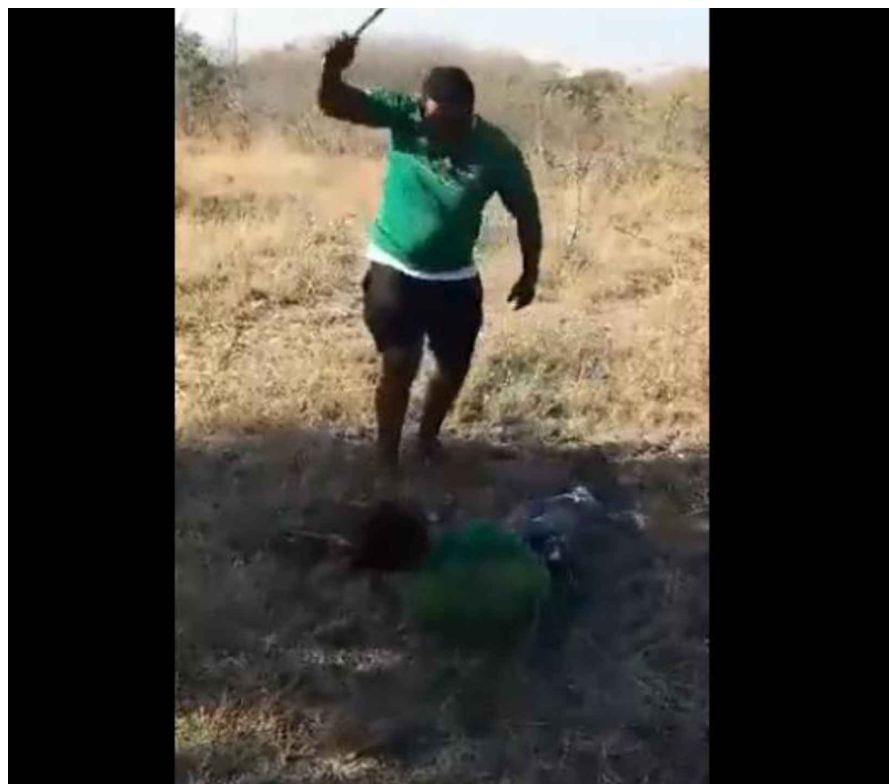
In addition to any such punishment, may, if he or she is convicted of that offence by the High Court, be declared by the High Court to be disqualified from voting at any election for a period not exceeding five years.

## Sources

*Zimbabwe Electoral Act*  
*Veritas*

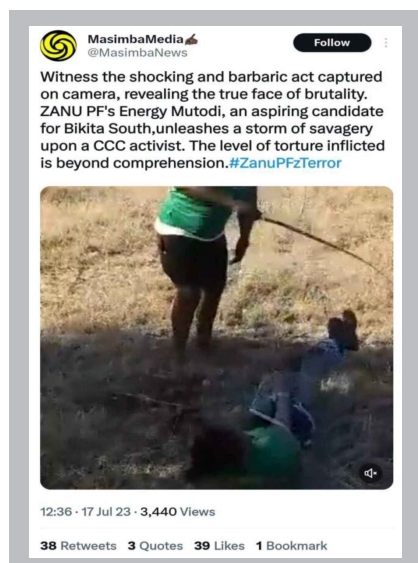
“  
**VERIFY**  
all information. Don't  
spread falsehoods.

# Is this Energy Mutodi in the assault video?



**Claim:** A video has gone viral on social media (Twitter and Facebook) of a man being identified as Energy Mutodi, the Bikita West Parliamentary candidate for Zimbabwe's governing ZANU PF party in the August 23 general election, viciously assaulting a man with a whip and a hammer while the victim's hands and legs are tied up. Many commentaries said Mutodi was assaulting a political opponent.

**Verdict: False** - this is not Mutodi



A ZimFact search online came across a video of the same man assaulting another man. These two videos, which feature the same man clad in the same outfit occurred at an obscure location in South Africa, and both the victim and the assailant speak in Zulu in the second video.

## Clues from the videos

**Video 1** - This video shows the first victim who is gagged and tied, this is the version in which the assailant is mistaken for Energy Mutodi as there are no visible context clues as only the whimpers of the victim are heard.

**Video 2** - This is a longer video in which the same man assaults another man under a bridge whilst he is tied up, but is not gagged. The two exchange words in Zulu as the assault goes on.

## Conclusion

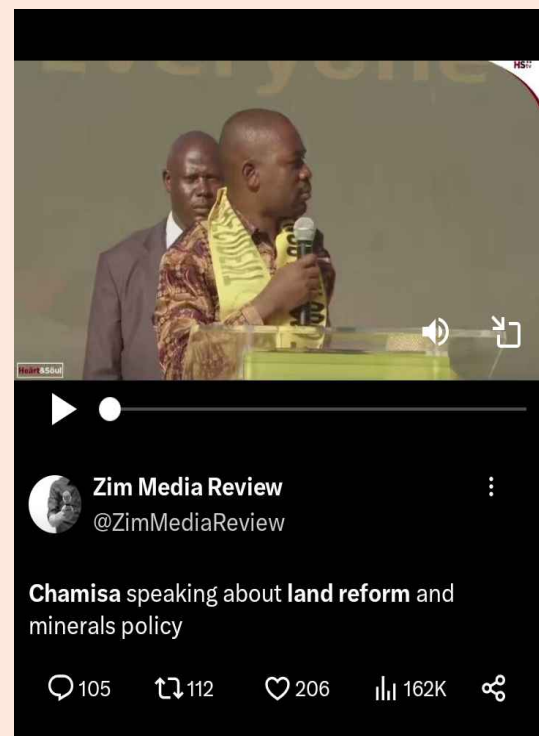
The social media claim is false, as it is clear from the context clues that the assailant in the video is not Energy Mutodi.

## Sources

*Social Media (Facebook and Twitter)*

# What did Chamisa say about land reforms?

**Claim:** A 25-second clip which went viral on Twitter and Zimbabwe social media platforms in the last couple of days quoted Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) opposition leader Nelson Chamisa saying "everyone who was removed from their farms should be reinstated."



The clip has Chamisa bellowing in Zimbabwe's Shona language "...wese akatorerwa... anofanira kudzorera" has largely been interpreted to mean that the CCC leader said he would reverse the state seizures of formerly white-owned farms - and therefore dispossess the black farmers settled there.

## Is this what he said: true or false?

**Verdict:** False

The 25-second clip was edited to change the meaning of the full statement and the context of what was said in the original statement.

What Chamisa actually said at a rally in Gweru on July 16 when he launched his 2023 general election campaign was that if won power on August 23, his government would reallocate land to villagers in Chilonga, Binga and Mutoko, whom he alleged are being forcibly evicted from their ancestral lands for some projects.

### Conclusion

The shortened version on social media has been manipulated to omit the context of Chamisa's statement on July 16 2023, including his promise to award full ownership Title Deeds to the black farmers now occupying the previously white-held lands which the country's long-ruling ZANU-PF party seized under a controversial resettlement programme.

The manipulated clip can easily mislead some people as Chamisa's rebranded CCC party was for years opposed to the farm seizures, as in its garbs as the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) it was associated with a political drive of reversing a programme that ZANU-PF sees as a redress of colonial injustices.

ZANU-PF accuses CCC of being a Western-sponsored puppet organisation dedicated to pursuing foreign interests, and those of Zimbabwe's former ruling white minority. The opposition dismisses these as false labels by a party which has economically ruined the country, and abused Zimbabweans for over 40 years.

“  
**PAUSE**  
before you post

# Did Zanu PF's Matabeleland South Chairperson call opposition 'confused cockroaches'?

**Claim** - Various media platforms reported that Environment, Climate Change, Tourism and Hospitality Minister Mangaliso Ndlovu referred to the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) as 'confused cockroaches' whilst at a ZANU PF rally.

### Is this true or false?

**Verdict:** True

During Zanu PF's rally in Matabeleland South on July 1, 2023 Mangaliso Ndlovu who is also Zanu PF legislator for Bulilima East made the statement whilst taunting the opposition Citizens' Coalition for Change.

In a live recording of the rally he is heard making the remarks in Ndebele which translate to;

“Your Excellency, Matabeleland South province is well organised. We (Zanu PF) don't have a single independent candidate. There are others who are confused. We wonder if they are a convention for confused cockroaches,”

### Conclusion

The statement attributed to Ndlovu by the media is true. The remarks contradict Section 160A paragraph 6 (c) of the Electoral Act's Code of Conduct for political parties and candidates and other stakeholders which prohibits the use of hateful language which incites violence towards any individual or group, including in speeches, songs and slogans.

### Sources

*Centre for Innovation and Technology (CITE) Twitter*

## Are half of UZ students HIV positive?

**Claim:** Almost half of students at the University of Zimbabwe test positive for HIV

**Source:** Pachopisa TV (Social Media Platform)

**Verdict:** Both False and misleading  
On 10 July 2023, a post by PachopisaTV went viral on Instagram claiming that 47 percent of students at the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) had tested positive for HIV. The claim was attributed to a report published by the Chronicle following voluntary HIV testing which occurred at the UZ.

When was this survey conducted? An investigation by Zimfact has shown that the above claim which is presented as “breaking’ news by PachopisaTV is not current but from a report published by the Chronicle in 2016. According to the National Aids Council (NAC), the statistics in the report have been resurfacing since the original report was published.



### Conclusion

The claim posted by the platform is not current and the quoted survey does not indicate the number of students who volunteered for the HIV testing to say with conviction that the statistics were accurate.

### Sources

*National AIDS Council, The Chronicle PachopisaTV*



This bulletin is an initiative of ZimFact, Zimbabwe's first fact checking organisation.



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