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Observers find most Nacala and Quelimane registration posts have problems, but Beira improved

The opposition provinces of Nampula and Zambézia continue to suffer a registration crisis. Observers from the Mais Integridade civil society observation consortium found 89% of registration posts visited in Quelimane in the week of 19-25 May had problems, a sharp increase from the 68% the week before. In Nacala Porto 75% had problems, and in Nampula city 50%, both higher than in the previous week.

There is also a major maldistribution of registration brigades, with a shortfall of registration brigades in opposition areas. Gaza has 140 extra brigades, almost double the number it needs. But Nampula needs 103 more brigades and Sofala 67. (see table below)

The big improvement was in Beira, where the STAE head had been caught on a WhatsApp group calling for a slow-down in registering opposition voters. Registration posts with problems dropped from 43% in the week 12-18 May to 25% in the most recent week 19-25 May.

But one-quarter of registration posts with problems remains very high. And these levels continue in southern cities, where technical assistance should be available and rapid - but clearly is not. In Maputo city 26% of registration posts visited had problems, up from 19% the week before; in Matola it was 18%. But in the Frelimo stronghold Gaza, only 11% of posts had problems.

At a national levels, 29% of registration posts visited by observers in the last two weeks had problems. This is exactly the same level as in the first two weeks of registration. Thus it is clear that the CNE and STAE never set up an adequate technical response, repair and servicing system.

But the second issue is that since the start, there have been more than double to number of problems in areas which have historically voted for the opposition, compared to those areas when had voted for Frelimo.

It is also clear that some registration posts in opposition areas have been well run with low levels of problems, which shows the problems are not all technical. This also raises questions about possible political bias by registration brigades and supervisors, and in the assignment of registration brigades.

Mais Integridade teams visit several registration posts a day and the following tables are based on their reports for the past two week. The %age shows the proportion of posts visited with problems (see more details below). Thus in past week, only 11% of registration posts in Quelimane were operating normally and 89% had problems.

% of registration posts with problems - Municipalities		
	12-18 May	19-25 May
Quelimane	68%	89%
Morrumbala	84%	78%
Nacala-Porto	72%	75%
Angoche	64%	67%
Nampula	43%	50%
Guruè	26%	46%
Moatize	14%	44%
Cuamba	50%	38%
Montepuez	16%	33%
Marromeu	100%	31%
Ilha	8%	31%
Malema	56%	29%
Cidade de Maputo	19%	26%
Mocuba	17%	25%
Beira	43%	25%
Matola	23%	18%
Matola-Rio	19%	18%
Mandlakazi	13%	15%
Massingir	29%	15%
Chiúre	14%	13%
Alto Molócuè	13%	11%
Insaca	20%	9%
Pemba	7%	7%
Mocimboa da Praia	21%	0%
Guro	0%	0%
Massinga	13%	0%
Chókwe	14%	0%
Total	29%	29%

200 registration brigades short in north but 140 extra in Gaza

The bias against opposition provinces is shown in the assignment of registration brigades. There are 9 921 625 potential voters and 3192 registration brigades, which means on average each brigade could register 3108 voters. Brigades in staunchly Frelimo Gaza must only register 1690 voters, but those in opposition supporting Sofala must each register 3997.

The table below gives voting age adults in the districts with municipalities in each province and the number of registration brigades assigned. The 4th column shows the huge variation in the number of people each brigade is expected to register. The final column is our calculation of number of brigades extra or too few. Again is it Zambézia, Nampula and Sofala that loses out.

Registration brigade numbers by province showing provinces with too many and too few					
Province	Potential voters	Registration Brigades	Voters per brigade	Brigades needed if proportionate	Surplus brigades (shown with - sign) and shortfall of brigades (in red)
Gaza	517,020	306	1690	166	-140
Inhambane	530,076	237	2237	171	-66
Tete	861,843	299	2882	277	-22
Manica	732,063	253	2894	236	-17
Niassa	680,254	227	2997	219	-8
C. Delgado	740,538	242	3060	238	-4
P. Maputo	1,283,336	409	3138	413	4
C. Maputo	728,946	196	3719	235	39
Zambezia	1,429,873	416	3437	460	44
Sofala	943,211	236	3997	303	67
Nampula	1,474,465	371	3974	474	103
Total	9,921,625	3,192	3108	3192	0

Calculating brigades must also take into account population density, as the law requires that voters must be 5 km or less from their polling station, which means that more sparsely populated districts will inevitably have fewer voters per brigade. But Niassa has a lower population density than Gaza, yet the number of voters per brigade is much higher. So this does not explain the discrepancy. There was a similar record of [more registration brigades in Frelimo areas in 2019](#), according to an article by Domingos do Rosario published by EISA.

Mais Integridade and the observation data used

The data is taken from 731 reports of visits to registration posts by Mais Integridade in the week 12-18 May and 767 visits in the second week 19-25 May 2023.


We defined a registration post as having a problem <difficuldade> if the report showed at least one of these four issues:

- + at the time of the visit, the post did not have all the necessary material available (such as registration forms and voter cards) or some equipment (computer, camera, printer) was not functioning.
- + the registering process was interrupted during the visit
- + voters cards were not being given to at least some people
- + the observer was not allowed to observe

Data is presented by province and by municipality. Mais Integridade is only observing 26 municipalities.

Data is presented as the %age of visits showing a problem

Mais Integridade is conducting the only civil society observation of the registration and is a consortium of Comissão Episcopal de Justiça e Paz (CEJP) of the Catholic Church, Centro de Integridade Pública (CIP), Núcleo das Associações Femininas da Zambézia (NAFEZA), Solidariedade Moçambique (SoldMoz), Centro de Aprendizagem e Capacitação da Sociedade Civil (CESC), Capítulo Moçambicano do Instituto para Comunicação Social da África Austral (MISA Moçambique) and Fórum das Associações Moçambicanas de Pessoas com Deficiência (FAMOD).

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