



## COUNTRY

ZAMBIA



## SNAPSHOT

OCTOBER 2008

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### ELECTIONS

**Zambians go to Presidential polls:** On 30 October 2008, Zambians took to the polls in the election of a new president to succeed the late President Levy Mwanawasa who died in August 2008. The presence of police and soldiers was heavy at voting stations for fear of violence erupting after the opposition accused the Government of planning to rig the results, and urged voters to sleep outside polling stations to prevent rigging. Rupiah Banda, Acting President, and opposition leader, Michael Sata, were locked in a very close race for the Presidency to ride out Mwanawasa's term until 2011.

According to preliminary results, Banda looked likely to be the winner based on the country's preliminary results showing Banda's 708,683 votes vs. Sata's 682,171 after 148 of the 150 constituencies were counted. Sata has meanwhile vowed to challenge the result, accusing the vote of being rigged - a statement resembling his 2006 loss to Mwanawasa. Speaking to journalists at the announcement venue, Sata stated, "I have evidence that results are being inflated ... They cheated me in 2006 and they want to do the same [now]."

For more Elections related stories, visit [www.consultancyafrica.com/africa-watch](http://www.consultancyafrica.com/africa-watch)

### FOREIGN INVESTMENT

**Zambia calls for Iranian investment:** Rupiah Banda, Zambia's Acting President, has appealed to Iranian investors to partner with Zambian business, noting that investment opportunities have been made available in the development of energy infrastructure and in the transport and communication industries. Banda said that Zambia is aware of Iran's expertise to deliver in the various development areas and welcomed cooperation in a variety of levels with the hope of later consolidating future friendly relations between the two countries.

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### STATS

#### Government & Leadership

Republic  
Acting Pres. Rupiah Banda

#### Population

12.45 mn (2008 E)

#### Inflation level

12.6% (2008 E)

#### GDP Growth Rate

6.2% (2008 E)

#### GDP Per Capita

US\$ 957.34 (2008 E)

#### Unemployment rate

50% (2000 E)

#### Population below poverty line

75.8% (2003 E)

#### Life expectancy at birth

38.59 (2008 E)

#### People living with HIV/prevalence

1.1 mn / 15.2% (2007 E)

#### ARV coverage

46% (2007 E)

#### AIDS Orphans

600,000 (2007 E)

#### PEPFAR Funding

US\$ 216,012,780 (2007 fin. year)

#### Global Fund

US\$ 201,446,419 (July 2008 E)

#### Gender Equity Index

58 (2007 E)

Source: UNAIDS; WHO; UNICEF; CIA Factbook; Social Watch; IMF World Economic Outlook.

## ENERGY

**Zambia to receive financing from World Bank towards electricity services:** After many years dealing with regular power cuts, Zambia has signed a US\$ 75 million financing agreement with the World Bank to provide electricity to 65,000 new customers. The agreement will assist in improving the existing distribution network of the parastatal power utility, Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation (ZESCO), extend the existing grid in selected areas of the country, and provide small power sources such as diesel units and solar systems. Power cuts in Zambia, which typically last up to 3 hours a day, are due to the fact that ZESCO targets domestic consumers for power cuts, in order to protect the mining industry which absorbs 20% of power supplies. This load-shedding has seen the wider economy suffering as residential and commercial sectors are built next to each other. In its project overview, the World Bank said that the low access rate for power has inhibited economic advancement and the project will aim to provide electricity to households, public facilities, and commercial establishments, benefiting a total population of 550,000 inhabitants.

*For more Energy related stories, visit [www.consultancyafrica.com/africa-watch](http://www.consultancyafrica.com/africa-watch)*

## HIV & AIDS

**Zambians concerned about the silence of presidential candidates on the issue of HIV:** Zambian people living with HIV & AIDS have stressed that the two main presidential candidates for the October 30<sup>th</sup> poll, acting President Rupiah Banda and opposition leader Michael Sata, have been silent on the issue of HIV & AIDS during their campaigns, allegedly because of the stigma associated with HIV & AIDS. Although officials and Western donors have acknowledged that the country has made great strides in fighting HIV & AIDS, Zambian nationals need reaffirmation that the new leader who will replace the late President Levy Mwanawasa will pay due attention to the HIV issue. Clementina Mumba, chairwoman of Treatment Advocacy and Literacy, noted that, "During the election campaign not a single candidate has said what they will do to tackle HIV & AIDS". According to a United Nations report, AIDS-related deaths have declined but activists maintain that the statistics are under-reported because some AIDS-related deaths are not reported by families due to the shame of revealing cause of death. Health Ministry spokesman Cassius Banda said the HIV prevalence in adults has also declined and in addition, the government has increased the number of people receiving free antiretroviral (ARV) treatment. However, Zambians are of the view that free treatment is not enough because access to treatment is not necessarily effective if there is a shortage of medical staff to attend to infected people.

*For more HIV & AIDS related stories, visit [www.consultancyafrica.com/hiv-aids](http://www.consultancyafrica.com/hiv-aids)*



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