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*Report to*  
**THE MINISTER OF LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

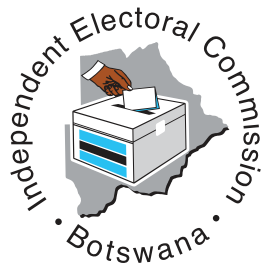
BOPHIRIMA POLLING DISTRICT  
BY-ELECTION





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The Minister  
Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development  
Private Bag 006  
Gaborone

The Honourable Minister,

In accordance with Section 65 A (13) of the Constitution of Botswana, we are submitting to you on behalf of the Commission, a report on the activities associated with the preparations for, and conduct of the Local Government by-election in the Bophirima Polling District in the Gaborone Bonnington South Constituency, following the passing on of its respective elected councillor.

On the 2nd March 2022, the Honourable Minister of Local Government and Rural Development issued an Election Instrument, pursuant to Sections 154 (1) of the Electoral Act. The instrument designated 17th March 2022 as a day for receiving nominations and 9th April 2022 for taking of poll.

The by-election for the polling district was therefore, held accordingly on the 9th April 2022.

We now have the pleasure to submit our report on this election.

Yours sincerely,

Honourable Justice A. B. Tafa  
Chairman  
INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION



Ms D. L. Serumula  
Acting Secretary  
Independent Electoral Commission



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## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

This report presents an overview of the Bophirima Polling District by-election held on the 9th April 2022. The Bophirima Polling District by-election was the 13th by-election to be held under the COVID-19 atmosphere with strict adherence to established COVID-19 preventative protocols. The disturbing outbreak of intolerance, characterised by intimidation and threats to poll staff by some party supporters continues to be a concern during by-elections. This trend has compelled security to be increased at polling stations. The Bophirima Polling District by-election had three police officers deployed at polling stations instead of the usual two. The by-election was a success as the results were announced within expected time. This report provides a comprehensive look at the overall processes of the Bophirima Polling District by-election.

## **PRE-BY ELECTION PHASE**

### **Sensitisation and Outreach**

Meetings were held with Gaborone West Police Station Commander, Court President at Phase IV Customary Court, Nurse-in-Charge of Gaborone West Clinic, Gaborone Bonnington South Member of Parliament, Bophirima Ward Development Committee and Party Liaison Committee for increased voter education. Workshops were held for Crime Prevention Committee members in the area, political parties' leadership and football clubs to disseminate important information about electoral processes and the locations of various polling stations. In addition, to ensure that all stakeholders were adequately prepared and equipped for the by-election, the Commission held training workshops for poll staff, candidates, polling agents and security personnel.

### **Issuance of duplicate Cards**

Duplicate voter registration cards were issued daily at all IEC Regional offices and at Bophirima Polling District during stakeholder workshops and meetings. They were also issued at polling stations within the polling district during the week preceding the by-election as well as during other IEC campaign activities.

### **Media and Elections**

Recognising the importance of the media in elections, the Commission launched targeted communication efforts to keep all stakeholders up to date on the by-election and the electoral process. The Commission, in particular, used social media platforms, radio, television, and print media to carry out media campaigns.

### **Radio & Television**

Radio Botswana (RB) and Botswana Television (BTV) were used extensively, due to their widespread coverage, to educate the general population about the by-election. In order to hone residents' interest and enhance voter participation in the by-election the Outside Broadcasting (OB) Van was used between the 22nd March and the 8th April 2022. The OB Van activities attracted satisfactory audience.

### **Newspapers**

In order to reach out to the general public, the Commission used a variety of newspapers as part of its publicity strategy. Newspapers carried publicity messages about the by-election and electoral processes because of their long news cycle and widespread distribution.

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## **Social Media**

To increase participation, the IEC's Facebook page and YouTube were used to connect with young people to encourage them to participate in the by-election.

## **Recruitment of Election Officials**

### ***Poll Staff***

During the election, 35 Public Officers were hired as poll staff, with one (1) and four (4) others recruited as Returning Officers and Assistant Returning Officers, respectively. The rest of the officers were Presiding Officers, Polling Officers, and Tallying Officers. All poll staff was trained to conduct the poll in an efficient and effective manner, in accordance with the electoral framework.

### ***Logistics***

As a critical process, logistical planning required the Commission to promptly implement effective measures to ensure a coordinated and inclusive approach to the by-election. A large part of the preparations for the election included securing transportation, as well as procuring and packaging election materials.

### ***Ballot Papers***

Two Thousand, Two Hundred and Fifty (2 250) ballot papers were printed and delivered on time for the by-election.

### ***Polling Booths***

To ensure that all voters, including those with special needs could vote freely and in secrecy, eight (8) specially designed booths were placed at the polling stations.

### ***Distribution of Election Materials***

To ensure the smooth running of the by-election, all election materials were distributed on time. Sensitive election materials were collected by Returning Officers and distributed to the Presiding Officers of the respective polling stations. Other election materials were equally distributed to all polling stations ahead of polling day. Thirteen (13) vehicles were sourced from various Government departments to provide transport for the by-election.

## **ELECTION PHASE**

### **Nominations**

Nominations for the Bophirima Polling District were received on 17th March, 2022, in accordance with Section 154 of the Electoral Act. Three candidates were duly nominated to contest in the by-election;

- *Mr. Mogapi Peter Leaparankwe of Botswana Congress Party (BCP)*
- *Mr. Mothei Onkemetse of Botswana Democratic Party (BDP)*
- *Ms. Sekete Mankie of the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC)*

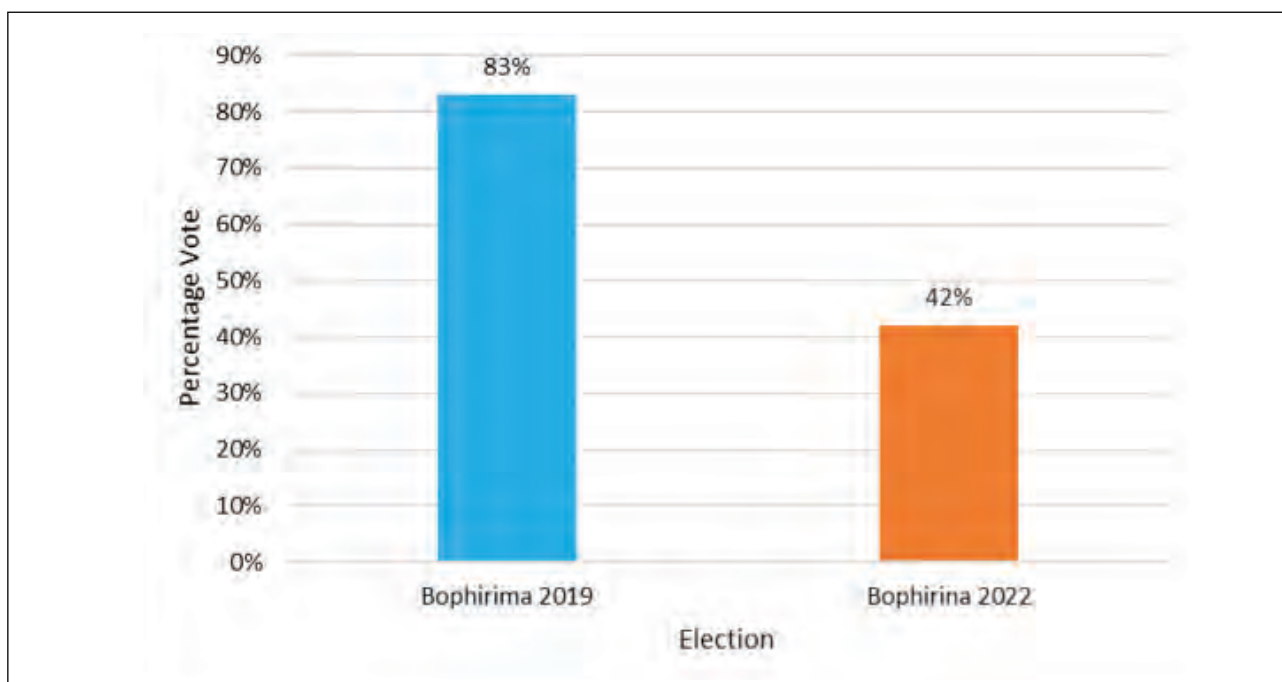




**Voters on a queue to cast their votes during the Bophirima by-election.**

## Polling

Figure 1 depicts the voter turnout for Bophirima Polling District by-election in April 2022. The voter turnout accounted for 42% of the total number of people who registered, which totalled One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-Three (1 963). Comparatively, this voter turnout was only about half of the total turnout in the 2019 General Election.



**Figure 1: Voter turnout for Bophirima Polling District**

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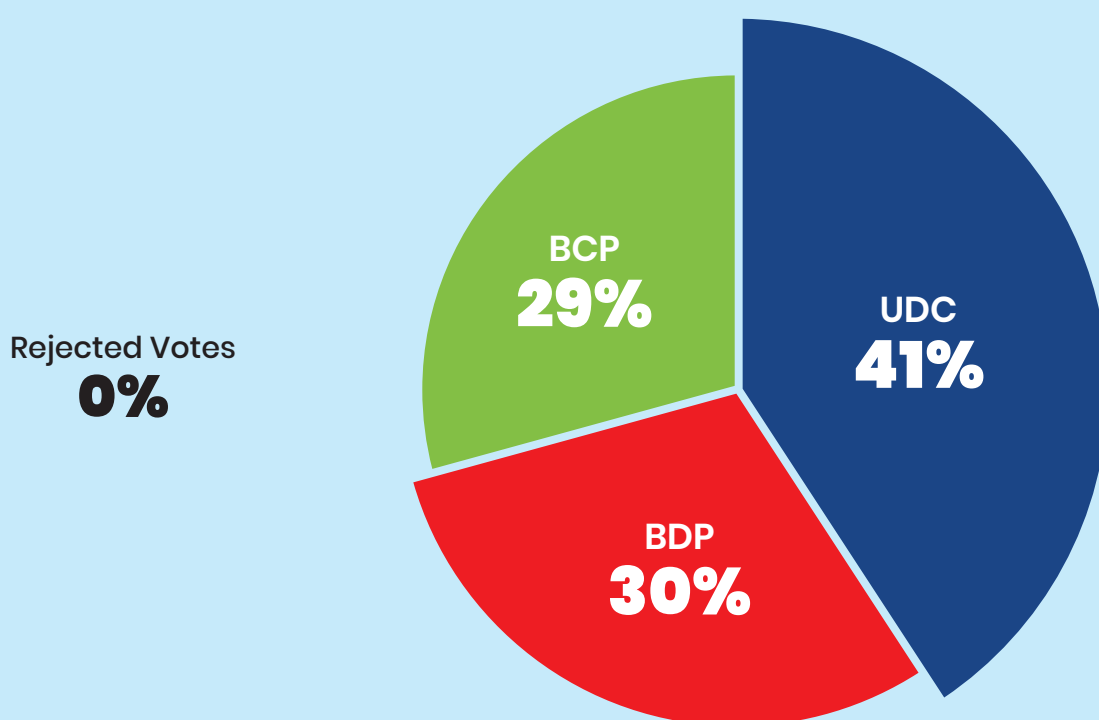
## Counting of Votes

Following the close of the poll, Presiding Officers performed a ballot paper account and transported ballot boxes to the Counting Centre, where verification began prior to counting of votes. This procedure ensured that the number of used and unused ballot papers matched the number of ballot papers issued to the Presiding Officer by the Returning Officer prior to the start of the poll. The Returning Officer then facilitated the counting of all ballots. Tally sheets were used to keep account for each candidate as votes were sorted and allocated accordingly. This administrative arrangement has been shown to speed up the counting process and improve its accuracy.

The Returning Officer is authorised by Section 77 of the Electoral Act to declare the results of the poll at the place of counting and then forward them to the Commission's Secretary. The results of the Bophirima by-election were announced promptly, within six (6) hours of closing of polling stations.

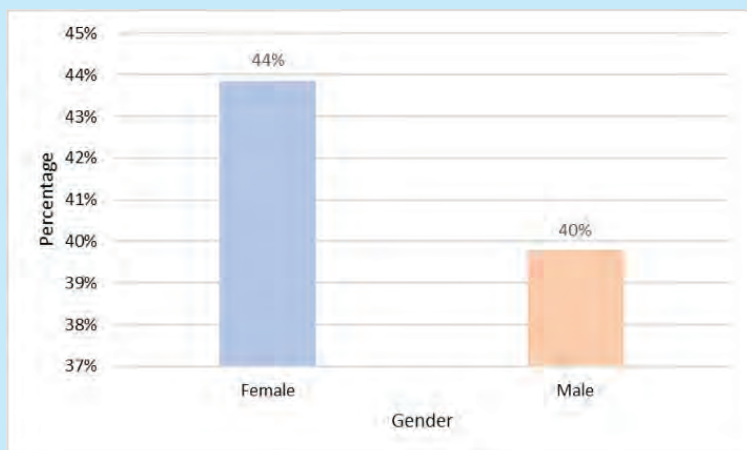
## Results

The percentage of votes cast for each political party is depicted in Figure 2. The Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) received 41% of the popular vote, with the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) receiving 30% and the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) receiving 29%. There was only One (1) rejected vote.

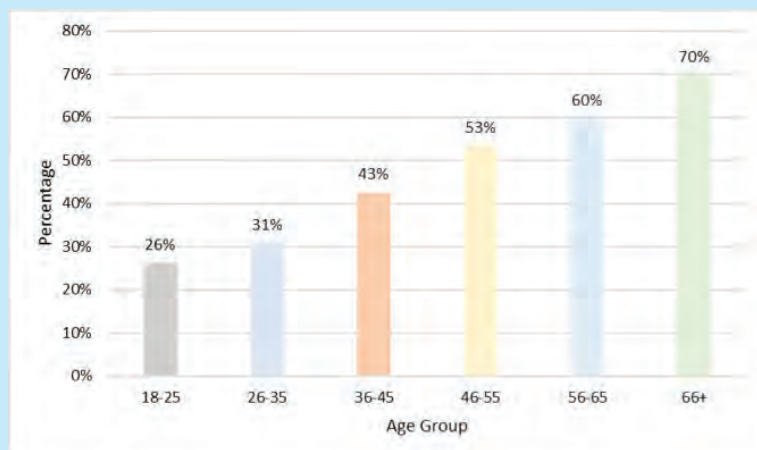


**Figure 2: Percentage of votes received per political party**

Figure 3 depicts the percentage of votes cast in the Bophirima Polling District by-election, disaggregated by gender. A trend in which women have accounted for a comparatively higher percentage (44%) of the votes cast, out of a total of registered females continues with the Bophirima by-elections. A small percentage of registered males continues to vote in by-elections.



**Figure 3: Percentage of votes according to gender**



**Figure 4: Percentage of votes per age group**

An examination of votes cast by age group reveals that participation of the youth is continually comparatively low throughout by-elections. Figure 4 indicates that only 26 % of young people between the ages of 18 and 25 who had registered voted. Additionally, there is a trend in which the graph demonstrates that as one's age increases, so does one's likelihood of voting increase during by-elections is depicted. This highlights the critical need for targeted voter education programs for the youth in order to increase their election participation.



**A woman casting her vote during Bophirima Polling District By-Election**



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## Elections Observation

Election observation enables an assessment of the degree to which democratic election principles are being followed. The Bophirima Polling District by- election was observed by four (4) local media houses i.e. Botswana Press Agency, Mmegi/Monitor, Press Photo and Botswana Guardian.

## Election Petitions

There were no petitions filed to challenge the outcomes of the Bophirima Polling District by-election.

## Payment of Poll Staff

All Poll staff for the Bophirima Polling District by-election have been paid for service rendered during the by-election.

## Expenditure

Elections are by nature costly. Bophirima Polling District by-election had a budget of Three Hundred and Eighty-Nine Thousand, Four Hundred and Fourteen Pula and Eighty-Seven Thebe (P 389,414.87). From preparation to election day, the total electoral expenditure for the by-election amounted to a total of two Hundred and Forty-Six Thousand, Three Hundred and Twenty Pula and Fifty-Six Thebe (P246, 320, 56). A wide range of critical pre-election activities and materials were covered by the budget, including publicity, workshops, and election materials, all of which were necessary to ensure the smooth delivery of a free and credible election process.

## Challenges

- *Unsatisfactory turn-up of voters, agents and candidates for public meetings and trainings leading to them being uninformed of administrative issues and requirements of the law.*
- *Difficulty in acquiring vehicles for the by-election due to extension of the Population Census data collection exercise.*
- *Heavy rains which were experienced for most part of the week, including on polling day made movement problematic. The Counting Centre was clogged with water.*
- *Section 83 of the Electoral Act which states that "An election agent shall appoint every clerk and messenger employed for hire or reward on behalf of the candidate" has proven to be problematic as it silent on the duties of such persons. Some candidates have resorted to taking advantage of this section by bringing people at the close of poll who harass poll staff.*
- *Access into the Counting Centre was difficult due to supporters' vehicles which were in and around the Counting Centre.*
- *People permitted by law and some poll staff members were denied entry into the Counting Centre by supporters.*
- *There was an eruption of rowdiness at the end of counting by one Counting Agent which incited noise and unruliness from other agents and supporters.*

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## Conclusion

The Bophirima Polling District By-Election Report pointed out various critical aspects of the conduct of the 9th April 2022 by-election. A detailed analysis of the entire process is provided, as are lessons learnt for future elections in Botswana.

The elections were held amid the persistent threat of the Covid-19 Pandemic, and the Commission was successful in enforcing compliance to established Covid-19 protocols.

Due to past by-election experience, security was increased during the Bophirima Polling District by-election. Although security was increased, it remains necessary to intensify dialogue with political parties in order to allay emerging fears of rigging of elections and reduce the proliferation of negative perceptions on the integrity of the Botswana electoral process. It is however, disheartening that when such dialogue is conducted some political parties choose not to partake. This act poses a risk not only to the electoral process but to the peace and stability that Botswana have enjoyed over the years.

In order to address the low voter turnout that has been realised, efforts to increase citizen participation in the electoral process must be intensified. Continued presence of rejected ballots necessitates increased voter education in order to ensure that voters possess the necessary knowledge to vote effectively. Despite a few isolated incidents of intolerance, the report shows that the by-election was largely a success



# ANNEXURES

Local Government By-Election Results

## Results

Polling District Code	Polling District Name	First Name	Last Name	Gender	Age	Party	Registered Voters	Votes Received	Valid Votes Cast	Rejected Votes	Total Votes Cast	% Voter Turnout	Win Margin
287	BOPHIRIMA						1963		818	1	819	42%	90
		SEKETE	MANKIE	F	49	UDC		335					
		MOTHEI	ONKEMETSE	F	44	BDP		245					
		MOGAPI PETER	LEAPARANKWE	M	59	BCP		238					

## Votes cast by Gender

	Female			Male			Grand Total
	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	F Total	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	M Total	
Bophirima Primary School	143	128	271	169	110	279	550
Gaborone West JSS	158	63	147	81	51	132	279
National Youth Centre	27	99	257	157	95	252	509
Tlhabologo Primary School	296	150	328	171	126	297	625
Grand Total	183	440	1003	578	382	960	1963

## Votes cast by Age Group

Polling Station	18-25		26-35		36-45		46-55		56-65		66+		Grand Total
	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	
Bophirima Primary School	29	11	108	48	101	77	42	51	27	39	5	12	550
Gaborone West JSS	11	4	49	21	55	41	31	25	17	13	2	10	279
National Youth Centre	42	11	135	61	98	66	28	35	8	15	4	6	509
Tlhabologo Primary School	31	14	125	56	119	92	44	55	21	41	9	18	625
Grand Total	113	40	417	186	373	276	145	166	73	108	20	46	1963

## Bophirima Primary School vote cast per Age Group by Gender

		Female			Male			Grand Total
Polling Station	Age Group	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	F Total	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	M Total	
Bophirima Primary School	18-25	15	9	24	14	2	16	40
	26-35	53	23	76	55	25	80	156
	36-45	38	37	75	63	40	103	178
	46-55	26	33	59	16	18	34	93
	56-65	11	22	33	16	17	33	66
	66+		4	4	5	8	13	17
Polling Station		143	128	271	169	110	279	550

### Gaborone West JSS vote cast per Age Group by Gender

Polling Station	Age Group	Female			Male			Grand Total
		Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	F Total	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	M Total	
Gaborone West JSS	18-25	4	1	5	7	3	10	15
	26-35	23	14	37	26	7	33	70
	36-45	33	18	51	22	23	45	96
	46-55	15	17	32	16	8	24	56
	56-65	8	8	16	9	5	14	30
	66+	1	5	6	1	5	6	12
<b>Polling Station</b>		84	63	147	81	51	132	279

### National Youth Centre vote cast by Age Group by Gender

Polling Station	Age Group	Female			Male			Grand Total
		Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	F Total	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	M Total	
National Youth Centre	18-25	24	8	32	18	3	21	53
	26-35	64	31	95	71	30	101	196
	36-45	48	27	75	50	39	89	164
	46-55	13	17	30	15	18	33	63
	56-65	6	11	17	2	4	6	23
	66+	3	5	8	1	1	2	10
<b>Polling Station</b>		158	99	257	157	95	252	509

### Tlhabologo Primary School vote cast by Age Group by Gender

Polling Station	Age Group	Female			Male			Grand Total
		Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	F Total	Didn't Vote	Vote Cast	M Total	
Tlhabologo Primary School	18-25	17	8	25	14	6	20	45
	26-35	61	35	96	64	21	85	181
	36-45	61	43	104	58	49	107	211
	46-55	23	29	52	21	26	47	99
	56-65	9	23	32	12	18	30	62
	66+	7	12	19	2	6	8	27
<b>Polling Station</b>		178	150	328	171	126	297	625











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