

OCTOBER 2022

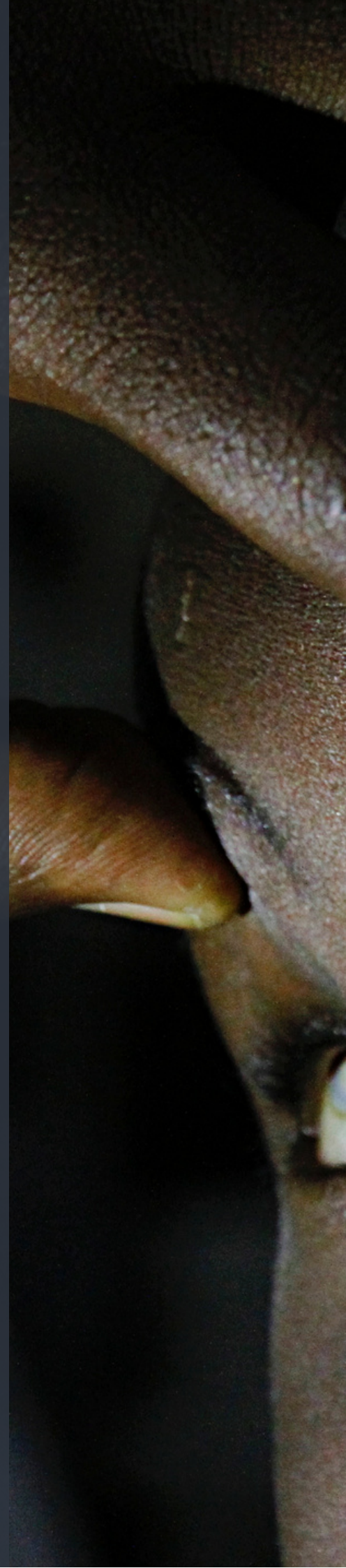
# FACTSHEET

**YOUNG PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES'  
PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL  
PROCESSES**

The Required Spring Board to  
Access Economic Opportunities



ZIMBABWE  
**PEACE**  
PROJECT



# Overview

**The political environment in Zimbabwe which is polarised has disproportionately impacted the participation of persons with disabilities' (PWDs) in political processes. It is unfortunate to note that politics in Zimbabwe is characterised by intolerance and hate language seen in the surge in gross human rights violations against persons with disabilities. This is sadly back sliding for a country aspiring to be a democracy and guided by constitutionalism.**

In August 2022, ZPP monitored and documented 257 human rights violations, with a total of 3,321 victims made up of 2,334 males and 987 females, including 31 (14M/17F) PWDs. The majority of human rights cases were perpetrated by the ruling Zanu PF party, responsible for 51% of the violations, followed by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) at 28%, Zimbabwe National Army at 4.1%, just above CCC at 3.8%, and municipal police at 3.6%. The general citizens among them persons with disabilities populated the highest percentage of victims at 89% while the Citizens' Coalition for Change (CCC) supporters followed at 11%.

The violence targeting persons with disabilities in August reached an alarming level raising red flags as the nation heads towards the general elections in 2023. In the past, ZPP has recorded cases where persons with disabilities have been denied equal opportunities to participate in general and political party primary elections. In some instances, violence has been a major stumbling block during elections and political party primary elections resulting in persons with disabilities withdrawing. This continues to be a thorn in Zimbabwe's drive towards ensuring that elections are inclusive of all citizens. As long as PWDs including young persons wait to be appointed to the legislature there will always be disproportionate attention given to issues affecting them. There is need for PWDs to be accorded opportunities in politics and in political parties so that they can advocate for their constituency to enjoy in particular economic opportunities. Access to economic opportunities for young people and women will break the dependency syndrome and remove societal induced disabilities.



# ISSUES OF CONCERN REGARDING PWDs

In August, ZPP recorded worrying cases which breached political rights of persons with disabilities' amongst other rights such as the right to freedom of assembly and association. The nature of these cases continue to point towards violation of civil and political rights in Zimbabwe. A serious case of assault of persons with disabilities was recorded on 22 August, at Nhakiwa Ward 14 in Uzumba. Zanu PF Ward Councillor Fagio Zondayi Marowa assaulted elderly villagers and persons with disabilities who had attended a meeting addressed by the opposition CCC leader Nelson Chamisa. The vulnerable villagers were accused of being CCC members after attending the meeting. In another unfortunate incident recorded in Harare, members of the Military Presidential Guard Unit were allegedly responsible for the murder of a 35 year old man at State House. Levy Musendo of Mukafose who was undergoing mental therapy died under unclear circumstances at or near State House in Harare.

On 20 August, Levy's father, Job Musendo, received a phone call from an unidentified police officer at Harare Central Police Station, informing him that his son had been arrested and detained. He was advised that his son had been taken to Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals for medical attention as he had sustained severe injuries and was bleeding profusely from the nose and mouth. On 24 August at around 16:00 hours, they were led into the office of a Chief Superintendent Moyo, who broke the news of their son's death. ZPP notes with concern that violation of PWDs' civil and political rights have been increasing as the nation heads towards the 2023 harmonized elections. As an urgent remedy to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy their rights freely, ZPP recommends the following interventions;



# RECOMMENDATIONS

1

·Government, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission and the Zimbabwe Republic Police must take serious steps now to enhance the participation of PWDs in the electoral system and thereby protect them from any form of political violence in the upcoming 2023 election and post-election period.

2

·There is need for government to setup a robust and inclusive dispute resolution and settlement mechanism at community level, regularly reviewed by community members.

3

·The Government and political parties should make their structures more inclusive for persons with disabilities, particularly women and young persons.

5

·CSOs are challenged together with ZEC to come with more electoral information and materials, civic and voter education tailored for persons with disabilities, in formats such as Braille, sign language and audio as required.

4

·Political parties should come up with measures that protect PWDs at any of their meetings and rallies.

6

·Government is urged to come up with disability friendly budgets. Information on the numbers and their needs should be harvested from the Population and Housing Census 2022



ZIMBABWE  
**PEACE**  
PROJECT



@zppINFO

