





We love the environment This is why we have optimized this report for digital and mobile consumption & sharing. We urge you not to print it unless very necessary. That way, we save paper, trees and future generations

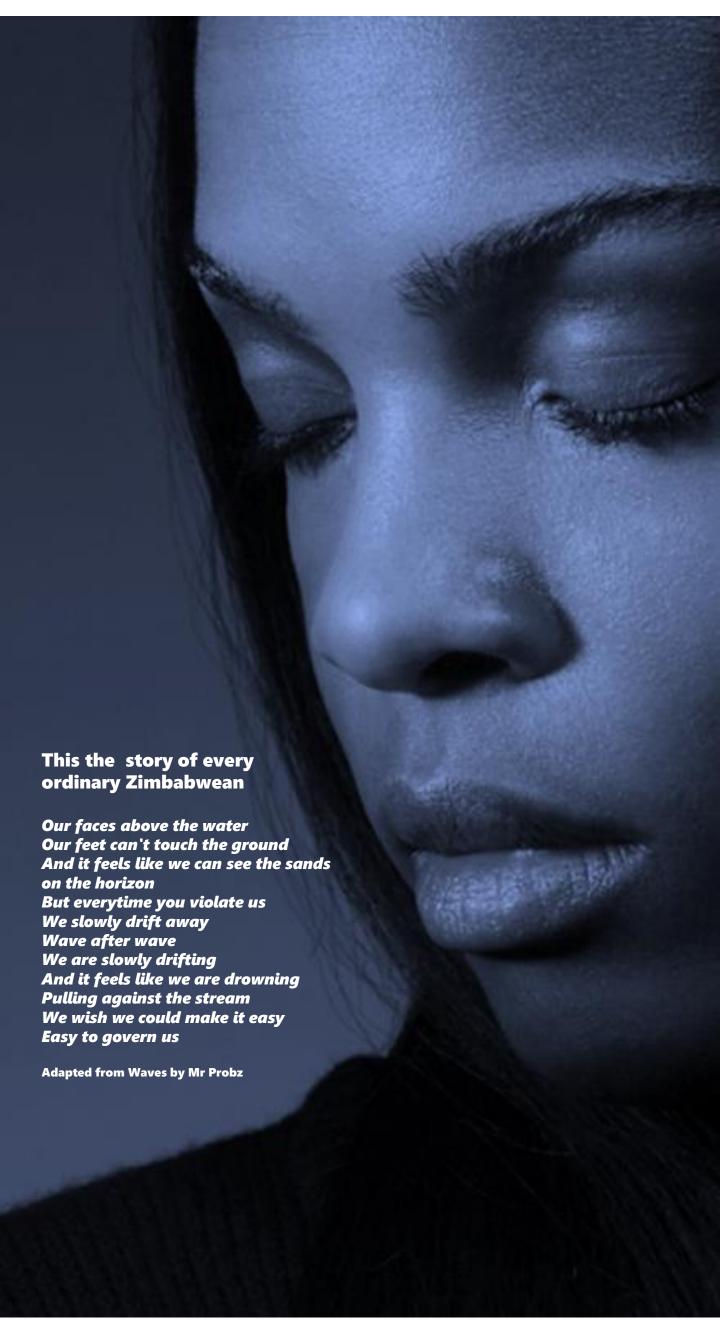






Documenting wave after wave of human rights violations









1.0 Executive Summary



A boy walks past the remains of a tuckshop that was demolished in Highfields, Harare. The tuckshop also served as a house for the owner and is one of the many informal trading spaces and houses demolished under an operation by the Zimbabwean government in June 2021.

PIC: ZPP INFO

In post-coup Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) has continued to record wave after wave of human rights violations as the democratic space continues to narrow. Criticising government has easily become a reason for one to get arrested, harassed, detained or denied access to government services.

The line between government and the ruling party has been violated, continues to fade and in all this, the ordinary citizen is the most affected.

Just this month, ZPP recorded a wave of evictions and demolitions resulting from the government's policy inconsistences, corruption and interference in local authorities.

This happened as service delivery continued to decline, and despite pronouncements by government that it had embarked on an emergency rehabilitation of urban roads, the current efforts have remained hardly noticeable as the majority of roads and other public infrastructure remain in a state of decay.

There was also a wave of repression marked by arrests and detention of civil and political rights activists.

This month, the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) dominated the list of human rights violators at over 44 percent, followed by Zanu PF and the Municipal Police at just over 21 percent each.

Municipal police and the ZRP enforced the demolition of houses and informal trading spaces and the ZRP was responsible for enforcing the lockdown imposed by government in response to the rise in cases of COVID-19.

Zanu PF, which is geared up for the 2023 elections and is in the process of setting up local structures countrywide, is doing so with little respect for the people's freedom of association.

In all this, general citizens make 99 percent of the victims of the human rights violations recorded this month.

Food and other aid continue to be used as a toll for political coercion and this month, ZPP recorded 31 cases of discrimination of people, during aid distribution with Manicaland, Masvingo and Midlands topping the list at 22.22 percent each.

In the month of June 2021, government imposed a lockdown to contain the rising cases of COVID-19 and this happened amid a wave of different human rights violations largely perpetrated by government agents, and the ruling party.

General citizens make 99 percent of the victims of the human rights violations recorded this month.

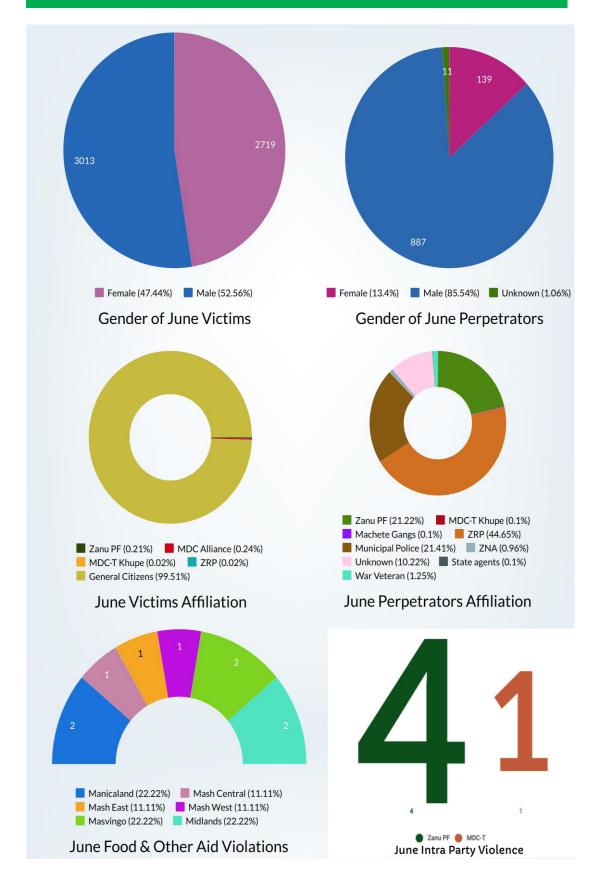








1.1 Violations infographic 1







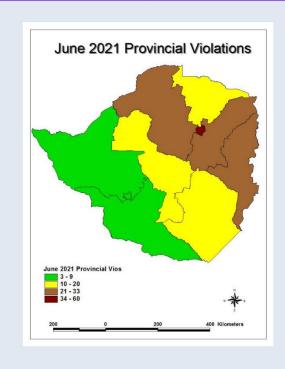


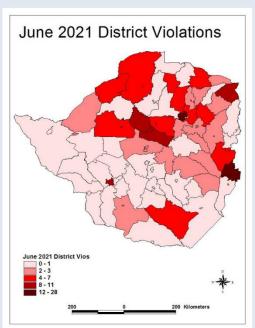
1.2 Violations infographic 2

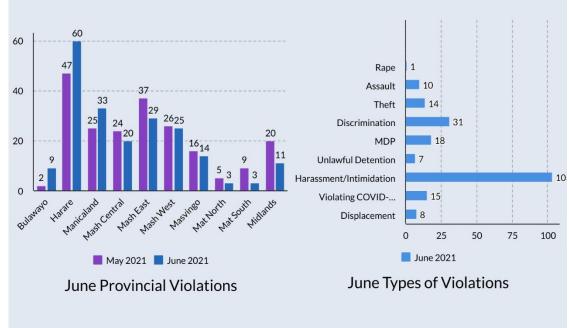
Human Rights Violations Monthly Dashboard

Zimbabwe Peace Project

Report time frame: June, 2021









To Download
the SPECC App,
Click this link











We cannot just sit and watch while they assault our rights!

It is in light of this that ZPP launched a Resist, Reject and Report Violence Campaign, **#RRRV2023**, to document and expose perpetrators of politically motivated violence as well as to create an active citizenry that resists, rejects and reports violence.

As part of its mandate of monitoring and documenting violations and peacebuilding, ZPP aims to contribute to a peaceful electoral process where citizens are empowered to reject candidates who incite them to use hate language and to engage in politically motivated violence.

2.1 Overall National Outlook

In the month of June, there was a general escalation in political activities countrywide, and in some areas where there had been generally acceptable tolerance of opposition activities, the space is narrowing on the back of Zanu PF's reactivation of its electoral activities.

The ruling party, which has always used all methods, hook or crook, to gain political mileage, is running a campaign where it is targeting to have five million votes in the 2023 elections.

The campaign was launched in 2019, but its implementation accelerated this year.

During the launch of the campaign, the then Zanu PF Secretary of the Commissariat said the strategy was not only having five million as potential voters, but people who are loyal to Zanu-PF.

"We have set ourselves a task of having a five million membership strategy that is capable of winning the Presidential election by at least 65 percent in the 2023 election," he said then.



On the other hand, the main opposition, the MDC Alliance has said it is targeting six million voters and it launched its mass rural mobilization strategy in May 2021.

The opposition party's secretary for rural mobilisation and strategy, Happymore Chidziva said from rural areas they were not targeting a specific age group.



"We just want at least three million rural voices. We are meeting opinion leaders, interfacing with them discussing change. Every society has its influential people and opinion setters hence we are meeting them before going to grassroots."

In the previous elections, both Zanu PF and the MDC Alliance attained less than three million votes each, so by targeting to have five million votes, this is a huge feat, and what is being witnessed in the communities shows the extent to which the parties are prepared to go to achieve this. In the history of Zimbabwean elections, the highest number of people who voted was in 2018 when a total 4.8 million people cast their ballots.

So, the five million Zanu PF target and and the MDC Alliance six million target add up to 11 million people, and Zimbabwe's population is 14 million people, about seven million of which are adults. The ambition by the two main political parties can only point to an explosive electoral campaign period.

On the side of Zanu PF, there has been widespread use of food and other aid as weapons of coercing people to join and be active members of the party. This is happening mainly in all the Mashonaland and Matebeleland provinces as well as the Midlands and Masvingo.

In some areas like Matebeleland North, Zanu PF has used the influence that traditional leaders have to forcibly recruit members. Countrywide, Zanu PF officials are forcing people to join cell and branch structures of the party and this is part of the process of building up a list of the expected five million voters.

Zanu PF activists and in some cases, the police have crushed the opposition MDC Alliance's attempts to campaign. In Bulawayo, the party has been attempting to do door-to-door campaigns, but the police have continued to either disrupt them, or ban them.









2.2 General Conclusion

The tussle for the rural vote is likely to have a huge impact on the human rights situation in the country. This is because there is a likelihood of an increase in inter-party violence.

In one of the interviews in Murehwa, an MDC Alliance supporter, who is victim of politically motivated arson in previous elections said, "This time if they (Zanu PF supporters) burn my house, I will also burn theirs. It is tit for tat." What this calls for, is the strengthening of electoral reforms that enable a level playing field ahead of 2023.

There is also need for inter party dialogue to carve out the longstanding scourge of unresolved political violence cases.

Only this can allow citizens to approach campaigns and electoral processes in a democratic and tolerant way.

In general, the following civil and political rights have been violated:

Section 58.

Freedom of assembly and association

- 1. Every person has the right to freedom of assembly and association, and the right not to assemble or associate with others.
- 2. No person may be compelled to belong to an association or to attend a meeting or gathering.

Section 77b.

Every person has the right to--

b. sufficient food;

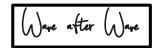
and the State must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within the limits of the resources available to it, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right.

Section 281.

- 1. Traditional leaders must--
- c. treat all persons within their areas equally and fairly.
- 2. Traditional leaders must not--
- a. be members of any political party or in any way participate in partisan politics;
- b. act in a partisan manner;
- c. further the interests of any political party or cause; or
- d. violate the fundamental rights and freedoms of any person











2.3 Provincial highlights

Mashonaland Central | Discrimination and Intra-party violence.

As Zanu PF gears up for elections, ZPP has recorded several cases of violent confrontations among Zanu PF officials as they conducted their restructuring exercise.

For example in Ward 16, Mazowe South, Glendale, Zanu PF activists issued threats to one of the candidates who had expressed interest in contesting in the Zanu PF Branch elections, forcing him to withdraw.

These cases continued to happen amid a wave of politicisation of government aid. For example in Mazowe West, on 19 June 2021, Zanu PF Ward 15 Councillor, Peter Chinyoka distributed maize from the government Social Welfare department to the elderly groups at Dandamera hall.

Before the distribution he addressed them, emphasizing that the maize they were about to receive was from Zanu PF and not government and told the beneficiaries that they were supposed to vote for President Mnangagwa and Kazembe Kazembe in 2023.

Mashonaland East | More intimidation and discrimination

In Mashonaland East, there is an increasing trend of harassment, intimidation and assault of opposition political activists as government and Zanu PF move to resuscitate the National Youth Service. In one of the cases in Mudzi South, a Zanu PF youth, Henry Kachepa harassed and intimidated MDC Alliance supporters who refused to join the National Youth Service program. Youths in Mudzi are allegedly being recruited by Zanu PF leaders under the National Youth Service to monitor local political activities.

On 4 June around 10am, about 50 villagers convened in Murehwa North at Zihute Hall Ward 30 to be registered to benefit from social welfare aid. It is alleged that, Zanu PF Ward Chairperson, Lovemore Mhuteyebani openly told the gathered villagers that MDC Alliance supporters were not to be registered as beneficiaries. Mhuteyebani told villagers who were gathered that MDC Alliance activists were not welcome to Zanu PF social welfare meetings. He said "MaMDC murinyoka hatidi kukuonai mu ward, vese vanoita zveMDC ngavaende Harare" (MDC supporters are snakes, we do not want to see you in this ward. All those who support MDC should go to Harare)

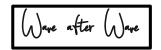
Mashonaland West | Force and intimidation

Zanu PF activists in Kadoma Central moved around in Rimuka forcing people to provide their personal details. It is alleged that Zanu PF aligned war veterans and activists who among them were Mupaya, Gwezuva and Tsitsi Mukwana moved around in Rimuka forcing people to provide their details that would be used for cell structure formations.

They told residents that if they do not provide their details, they would not benefit from government programs.

In a clear case of interference in the work of the civil service, a senior nurse in Chegutu West was redeployed to another clinic after she barred Zanu PF activists led by one Councillor Never Moyo from conducting their meetings at the clinic.









2.3 Provincial highlights

Harare Metropolitan | 'They are terrorists'

The State continued to target civil society leaders and opposition activists in a bid to silence dissent. On 12 June President Emmerson Mnangagwa urged former liberation fighters to be wary of the MDC Alliance led by Nelson Chamisa which he branded a terrorist organisation that was "pro-violence" and "anti-people". Speaking at the launch of empowerment programmes for war veterans in Harare, Mnangagwa claimed the MDC Alliance was anti-democratic and anti-developmental. He said, "Let us all remain astute and vigilant, aware of the asymmetrical tactics of the opposition, in particular, the MDC Alliance whose character resembles that of a terrorist organisation. The MDC Alliance has nothing democratic about it. It is anti-constitution, anti-development and anti-people, but pro-violence and destruction. Let us remain vigilant and be wary of the MDC-A, which is anti-people and anti-democratic."

Matebeleland North | Aid as a political weapon

Aid continues to be the most widely used weapon of choice by Zanu PF in their campaign, with cases prevalent in Lupane East. In one of the incidents, a Zanu PF activist, Tryphine Khumalo was moving around threatening people in Khatshana village to join Zanu PF. She was in the company of three men and they were registering people into the party cell group book and they were also using the social services book.

In another incident in Binga North, ward 9, Chief Saba instructed all village heads to send through names of opposition supporters to him so that he would 'deal with them'.

Matebeleland South | Slogans

In Gwanda South at Stanmore during a community meeting it was reported that a Zanu PF activist, Simpson Sibanda, forced community members to recite Zanu PF slogans. Sibanda said that anyone found to be supporting the opposition would be punished and evicted from the area.

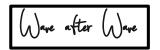
It is reported that in Manama village in Gwanda North, Zanu PF activists are mobilizing voters using a new program of recruiting war collaborators. The program is meant to recruit war collaborators who were left out during the 1997 payout exercise. The vetting process of the war collaborators has been taken over by Zanu PF activists instead of the Department of War Veterans. In one incident it was reported that Janice Nare spoke openly during a meeting that the exercise was a Zanu PF campaigning tool to gain five million voters

Manicaland | Aid as a political weapon

In Chimanimani, Zanu PF hijacked council works programmes by taking over the recruitment processes. Zanu PF local officials took over the recruitment of the general and casual workers for a road rehabilitation programme that began early June in Chimanimani and they only took in those who are in the Zanu PF branch structures. The partisan recruitment not only interfered with the human resources procedures of the council, but also whittled the power of the council over the workers, who were insubordinate, claiming they owed their allegiance to Zanu PF and not the council.

All of this is clearly part of the scheme to use all available resources and platforms to coerce people to join Zanu PF ahead of 2023 in violation of the freedom of association.









2.3 Provincial highlights

Midlands | Coercive mobilisation

On 6 June 2021, Zanu PF representatives were moving around ward 4, section 12 and 13 of Mbizo Kwekwe listing down people's names to create Zanu PF cell groups. The group, comprising of two women and a man informed residents that the lists were also going to be used for future food distribution programmmes. This goes against food distribution principles that provide that every deserving beneficiary must get aid regardless of political affiliation.

Masvingo | Health crisis

In Masvingo province, the right to health care was compromised through the lack of COVID-19 vaccines as the province grappled with the increasing number of COVID-19 new positive cases. The province had one of its districts, Chiredzi, being declared a COVID-19 hotspot. The increase in cases in Chredzi is attributed mostly to illegal border crossing where nationals from Somalia, DRC Congo, Rwanda and Ethiopia were now regular users of the illegal route via Chikwalakwala. More effort needs to be made to tighten the illegal crossing points and help curb the spread of COVID-19 in the province.

Manicaland | Council hijacked

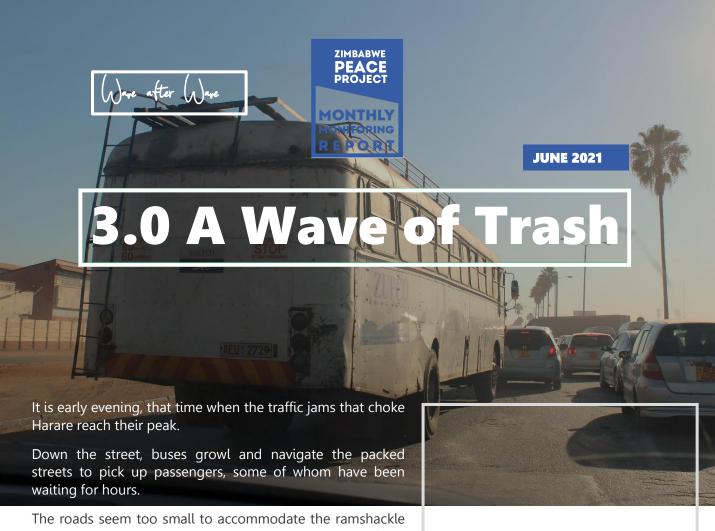
In Chimanimani, Zanu PF hijacked council works programmes by taking over the recruitment processes.

Zanu PF local officials took over the recruitment of the general and casual workers for a road rehabilitation programme that began early June in Chimanimani and they only took in those who are in the Zanu PF branch structures. The partisan recruitment not only interfered with the human resources procedures of the council, but also whittled the power of the council over the workers, who were insubordinate, claiming they owed their allegiance to Zanu PF and not the council.

All of this is clearly part of the scheme to use all available resources and platforms to coerce people to join Zanu PF ahead of 2023 in violation of the freedom of association.







The roads seem too small to accommodate the ramshackle public buses, which move slowly on the shoulders of the streets, sagging like old mattresses under the weight of their fatigued passengers.

Just outside the city centre, privately owned commuter omnibus operators, who have endured a year of being banned from operating by government, fight for passengers, their touts leaning out of half-open doors.

Choking on the black fumes pumped from hundreds of over-revved, under-serviced engines, police officers deployed on intersections struggle to keep the flow moving smoothly.

On the other side of Harare, the North, and particularly Borrowdale Road, which passes through the Head of State's official residence, all is quiet and smooth, just like the road itself.

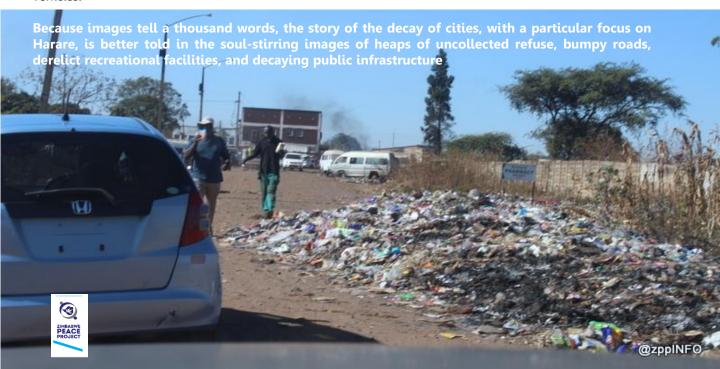
The chaos of Harare's roads recently hit the headlines and one government official remarked that the congestion is a result of the availability of fuel!

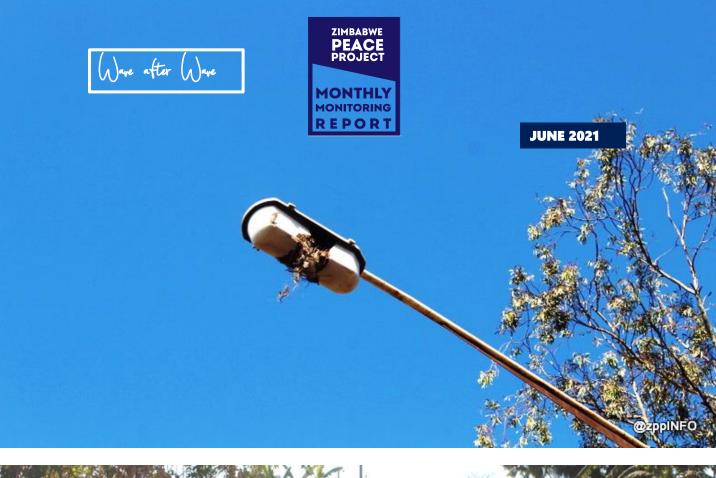
One government official remarked that Harare's congestion is a result of the availability of fuel!

Beyond the congestion, Harare, especially the southern and western parts, where the poor live, is generally neglected.

The public service infrastructure has been left to deteriorate to unimaginably deplorable levels of decay. So, this month, ZPP focuses on the level of neglect and deterioration of some parts of Harare in pictures. This is because it is the duty of government to provide, upgrade and maintain the infrastructure and it is the right of citizens to enjoy what they pay taxes and rates for. As of now there is little to talk about in terms of the realization of this right.

This is because the priorities of government appear to be off the mark considering that a lot of money was spent on the Mbuya Nehanda statue and more millions were spent on the purchase of chiefs' vehicles.













Service delivery is the fundamental function of developmental local government. Services such as waste management, water and health services are closely associated with the well-being of urban dwellers.

During the process of the making of the 2013 Constitution of Zimbabwe, there was a general consensus that devolution of services and functions to local government was key in paving way for localized service delivery solutions.

It was a major victory when local government was elevated and given constitutional protection and as a result, there were great expectations that service delivery would improve in the cities, towns and smaller urban centres.

Eight years later, those expectations are nowhere in sight and it appears urban service delivery is deteriorating and there has been little effort to fully implement devolution, and the politicization of urban councils has further slowed any progress. In light of all this, we proffer the following recommendations.

Vision 2030: Zimbabwe's achievement of the Vision 2030 set by President Emmerson Mnangagwa's administration to make the country a middle income society will not be achieved unless local public service delivery is fundamentally transformed. In light of this, we call on the government to show political will to ensure the improvement of service delivery and to invest in the setting up and maintenance of requisite infrastructure.

Devolution: The implementation of genuine and effective devolution measures should go beyond the political talk that it is right now. Devolution should be implemented as spelt out in the Constitution, which recognizes a three-tier system of government, and this is an 'indicator of the depth of decentralization, and the ability to bring government close to the people it is supposed to serve'. Devolution is recognised as one of the Founding Values and Principles to the Constitution and is therefore a fundamental aspect of governance in Zimbabwe.

Although not entirely independent from the central government, devolved local authorities enjoy a certain degree political, fiscal and administrative autonomy, which helps them manage their resources in a more efficient and localized way.





Depoliticisation: The depoliticisation of local authorities is one of the key steps that should be taken to ensure that elected and appointed officials serve their mandate without any political interference.

The recent recalls of councilors and the subsequent continued ban of by elections has left citizens dis-enfranchised and the whole politicization of the local government secretariat has resulted in priority being given to political survival and power struggles ahead of serving people.

Overally, in order to improve service delivery there should be increased public sector investment, promotion of ethics in local government administration, sanctioning of financial malpractice and strengthening of intergovernmental synchronization.

The fact that the opposition controls most of the urban local authorities has been the bone of contention as Zanu PF, which controls central government, uses its influence to interfere in the operations of local authorities then blame the opposition for all the problems.

For example, in December, President Mnangagwa was quoted in the media saying

"The problems obtaining in our towns and cities are because of failure by the MDC but as Government we have already made a decision that we cannot sit idly while the situation continues to deteriorate."

"We sat down and agreed to rescue the situation so that our cities do not collapse totally so soon something along those lines will start happening," said President Mnangagwa.

This came as local authorities blamed government for not allocating them funds for road rehabilitation from the Zimbabwe National Roads Authority.

This political blame game can only result in more decay in urban authorities and this must be arrested immediately.



It is a chilly afternoon in the small town of Marondera, some 70 kilometres east of Harare.

Nothing appears unusual, it is just like every typical Zimbabwean town, dominated by vendors and small scale traders and other commercial activities.

Marondera is surrounded by farms and some 10 kilometres to the east of the town is Maganga, a sprawling farm occupied by hundreds of small scale farmers who took over the area during the land reform exercise.

Each with their own piece of land, they rely on livestock and maize farming. The place is a political hotspot, where Zanu PF has dominated over the past decade.

But that comes with its problems as the poor farmers, who have over the years been used as political pawns, are at the receiving end of the factional fighting.

So, on June 1, 2021, the Messenger of Court, accompanied by police officers descended on the farm and started forcibly evicting the 500 families settled on the farmers.

This followed a long-standing dispute between the farmers and a local company, Hunyani Timbers.

Hunyani is claiming ownership of the land and when the ZPP visited the farm, truckloads of men accompanied by dozens of police officers were conducting the evictions with the supervision of the Messenger of Court.

The farmers and their families were dumped at an open space a few metres from the main Harare Mutare highway without any food, provisional shelter and toilets.

Over 100 children are still sleeping in the open, enduring cold winter nights.

June is one of the coldest months in Zimbabwe, and temperatures at night can be as low as 5 degrees Celsius.

Speaking to NewsHawks, about Maganga the Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution Aplonia Munzverengwi has confirmed that the farm belonged to Hunyani Estate.

"The farm was given to Hunyani Timbers who were the rightful owners of this land, so we have sent a request to the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, Fisheries and Rural Resettlement to consider these farmers who have been staying at this place for many years so that he grants 210 hectares to allocate these farmers," said Munzverengwi.

This was not the only incident of eviction and demolition this month.

In Harare, demolitions started in most of the low class suburbs.

Council officials, backed by troops of armed police officers demolished houses and informal trading spaces in Epworth, Waterfalls, Highfields, Mbare, Budiriro, Glen View and other areas.

Despite Chitungwiza Residents Trust (Chitrest) obtaining a Court order to stop demolitions, the Harare City Council continued with demolitions in Mbare.

ZPP estimates that over 2500 people were affected by the demolition of houses and tens of thousands of informal traders were affected when their operating spaces were destroyed.











4.1 Demolitions: Women & children affected

Women dominate the number of people in the informal sector and the demolition of their operating space gravely affects the levels of economic empowerment of women.

In addition, woman make the majority of the primary care givers, and when their operating space and houses are demolished, they are left with no other means with which to fend for the family. Homelessness affects every facet of women and children's lives. The experience of homelessness impedes their emotional, social and behavioural development.

In general, homeless women and children consistently exhibit more health problems. Environmental factors contribute to their poor health and they are vulnerable to infectious and diseases.

Women and children without proper homes are at great risk of all forms of harsh weather. We are in the winter season and demolitions with no alternative accommodation are cruelty in itself. The impact of such actions on women with disabilities and those with children with disabilities is unimaginable.

Section 28 of the Constitution states that: "The State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within the limits of the resources available to them, to enable every person to have access to adequate shelter.

The demolitions and evictions infringe on the rights of the residents to decent housing and shelter, freedom from arbitrary evictions as espoused by the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the UN Charter.





The disjoint, policy inconsistency and corruption in government has become a major human rights issue in Zimbabwe.

The current spate of demolitions and evictions, which are not happening for the first time, prove that there is no clear policy direction in government because a number of the structures and houses that are demolished are not entirely illegal.

Through political patronage, Zanu PF officials have overridden the role of councils and allocated stands without the full involvement of city authorities. This has often resulted in houses being built on land already allocated to others, or on wetlands and other unsuitable locations.

In some cases, corrupt council officials have allocated stands illegally and people have been given the green light to construct operating spaces in undesignated areas.

One of the resident interviewed by NewZimbabwe.com said:

'We do not have good administration in this country. If we had a government which was sympathetic with the people, it could have at least provided an alternative source of income for us because you cannot destroy people's livelihoods without an option.'

The inconsistency and the conflation of government and the ruling party is evidenced by the contradictions that happened during the June evictions.

On 29 June, The Herald reported that 'Zanu PF' had put a stop to the ongoing house demolitions around the country after engaging the relevant Government ministries saying the ruling party values the right to shelter.

Party Secretary for Administration Obert Mpofu said "...the current wanton demolitions in urban and peri-urban areas must stop forthwith while the processes to resolve the associated challenges are in motion. An all stakeholders meeting will be convened soon to discuss similar matters in areas affected"

It defies logic how the party, not government would order a stop to the demolitions, and in some way it exposes the state-party conflation that has haunted Zimbabwe for decades.

Ironically, even after Mpofu's pronouncements, demolitions continued in informal traders' spaces, which are the source of livelihoods for many.

We strongly urge government to keep to its supervisory role and not interfere in the operations of local authorities.

Extreme interventions like demolitions should always be the last option after all engagement avenues have been explored.

There should also be a clear line between the ruling party and government.













The Zimbabwe Peace Project is Zimbabwe's premier human rights monitoring and documentation organization.

OUR MEDIA PRODUCTS



Not your usual typical serious stuff. Positive Vibrations is a weekly offbeat video stories of positive change in communities where ZPP works, and beyond!



The voices of Zimbabweans come alive on THEVODCAST, a video or audio broadcast feeding into the human rights discourse of the dat



ZPP's prime human rights report comes every month and documents the prevelance of human rights violations in Zimbabwe



ZPP's monthly newsletter published digitally and in print and is circulated nationally and reaches over 20k online

OUR CAMPAIGNS



The Resist, Reject and Report Violence, or #RRRV2023 campaign features provincial analysis of the political temperature every month and sits in our Monthly Monitoring Report. #RRRV2023 also runs in real time on ZPP's social media platforms and seeks to create active citizens who report, resist and reject violence

OUR COMMUNITY WORK



A safe space for women to discuss women's rights issues. Through the SHERO Circle platforms, ZPP draws out an issue-bases women's rights advocacy thrust.



A platform where community members meet elected and traditonal duty bearers to discuss key community issues in an environment of free expression, with the aim of budiling peace and coexistence



A platform for young people to discuss issues affecting them and to raise awareness on human rights