



MONTHLY
M**ONITORING**
REPORT

DECEMBER 2019



**ZIMBABWE
PEACE
PROJECT**

Actions Speak Louder...

Introduction

As the curtain came down on 2019, Zimbabwe continued to experience economic challenges that saw the populace having a rather troubled festive season. Prices of basic commodities remained steeply priced, rendering them unaffordable for the majority of citizens whose monthly income is below ZWD1, 500 per month¹, against the cost of the food basket for an average family of five that was pegged at ZWD3, 159.52² in October 2019. The continued electricity and water crises further dampened the festive mood as citizens had to grapple with water and electricity shortages. The burden on parents has also been added by the increases in school fees in both government and private learning institutions. These increases are despite the fact that incomes of most citizens have remained generally stagnant.

The drought that the country is experiencing has seen citizens, in rural and urban areas relying on food aid for their survival. The citizenry also started receiving agricultural inputs through the Presidential Input Scheme. It is sad to note that despite the preliminary report issued by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Ms. Hilal Elver in which she stated the importance of aid being distributed in a non-discriminatory manner, Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) continued recording incidences of politicisation of food and other aid in December 2019. The erratic rainfall received in December did not do much in raising the spirit and hope of Zimbabweans.

The politics of the country continued on a negative trajectory with some divisive utterances being made at the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (Zanu PF)'s 17th Annual National People's Conference held at Goromonzi High School from 11-16 December 2019. The Deputy Minister of Defence, Victor Matemadanda declared that Zanu PF would not be removed from power, even by elections and that in the event of losing elections, the party would stay in power by any means necessary³. Such loaded statements insinuate that the party can easily flout the provisions of the constitution and the tenets of democracy that give citizens the right to select a government of their choice [Constitution of Zimbabwe Section 3 {2(a, b, c, d, f)}].

¹ <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2019/12/cost-of-labour-vs-cost-of-living/>

² <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2019/12/cost-of-labour-vs-cost-of-living/>

³ <https://www.thestandard.co.zw/2019/12/15/zanu-pf-will-rule-hook-crook/>

ZPP also recorded cases of violence against members of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) by Zanu PF supporters. Such brazen targeting does no good to the country particularly in bringing these two critical parties to dialogue on revival of the economy. The targeting is also detrimental to the well-being and image of the country and creates a stumbling block to nation building.

In his New Year's Eve speech and at an Annual Thanksgiving and Dedication Service in Bulawayo, the President Emmerson Mnangagwa promised to work towards increasing productivity, creating decent jobs, empowering citizens and providing safety nets for the vulnerable. The president of the main opposition party, the MDC, Advocate Nelson Chamisa on the other hand promised to roll out action aimed at restoring dignity, promoting development and pushing for change in Zimbabwe⁴. Citizens would rather see more action oriented statements rather than rhetoric which has occupied the political landscape since after November 2017.

Machete wielding artisanal miner gangs continued wreaking havoc with a gang popularly known as "Team Barca" murdering a police officer in Battlefields. The unrelenting exhibition of lawlessness by these gangs makes it impossible for citizens to enjoy security of person as guaranteed by the constitution. The challenges ushered in by this unfortunate scheme of things demands that the law takes its course and demonstrate that no one is above the law even politicians.

Police brutality and harassment continued unabated especially in Harare where police indiscriminately smashed windows of vehicles in the Central Business District (CBD) as they attempted to disperse vendors from unauthorised vending sites. The police also harassed and apprehended two journalists as they rolled out this operation.

It is regrettable that nine months after Cyclone Idai hit Manicaland and Masvingo provinces, victims are still living in makeshift tents and relying on food aid from the government and well-wishers. Some of the food they get is not fit for human consumption.

⁴ <https://www.thezimbabwemail.com/politics/chamisa-blasts-mnangagwa-2/>

State media was once again in its mode of attacking Civic Society Organisations with The Patriot of 20 December 2019 publishing an article titled “*Unholy Alliance*” which directly attacked the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) and CSOs who participated and pledged their support and commitment when the National Convergence Platform was launched on 12 December 2019⁵. The publication accused the church of driving a regime change agenda yet the National Convergence Platform is a platform that seeks to bring together stakeholders such as, churches and civil society organisations to map a way forward for broadbased national dialogue in order to come up with solutions to the socio-economic and political challenges bedevilling the country. The publication published falsehoods denigrating leaders of prominent civil society organisations such as the Zimbabwe Peace Project’s National Director, Jestina Mukoko, SAPES Trust Director, Ibo Mandaza and ZCC Secretary General, Reverend Kenneth Mtata. The Patriot has a history of advancing state propaganda through publishing falsehoods about perceived state critics, particularly CSOs. What is strange is that the publication continues in its age old habit of denying those it criticises a right of reply which is the cornerstone of professional journalism.

ZPP recorded a total of 119 human rights violations in the month of December. This is a sharp decrease from the 209 recorded in November 2019. December has always recorded lower numbers of human rights violations probably because focus will be on the farming season and tending to fields. As has been the trend in the past, intimidation and harassment formed the majority of the violations at 60. The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) dominated the list of perpetrators, followed by Zanu PF. The dominance by the police reveals a state where there is use of the security apparatus to stifle dissent. This trend is a shift from the former government of the late Robert Mugabe where Zanu PF almost always dominated the list of perpetrators. Mashonaland and Harare provinces recorded the highest number of violations with Mashonaland Central recording 22 violations, Harare with 21 violations and Mashonaland East, 19 violations. Matabeleland provinces recorded the lowest violations as usual.

Case File Highlights

⁵ The National Convergence Platform is a space that seeks to open discussion on the “Sabbath Call” as a means of finding lasting solutions to the problems that are bedevilling the country.

Discrimination in the distribution of food and other aid remained problematic in the month of December 2019 with a 22.7% contribution to the total recorded violations. The violations also affected citizens' other rights and freedoms such as the freedom of association. The ongoing drought has rendered a number of citizens dependent on aid from both the government and humanitarian Non -Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Communities have been receiving food aid and agricultural inputs as the rainy season has started. Unfortunately, the aid has been manipulated in many cases for political mileage and as a retribution tool. Supporters and perceived supporters of the MDC continued to be targeted with this form of discrimination as they were being punished for their political affiliation.

On 30 December 2019, in ward 14, Gokwe Gumunyu, villagers gathered at Nyamhara Business Centre to receive rice which had been disbursed by the government and was meant for every villager. The Zanu PF chairperson in the area, Joe Madzana informed the villagers that all the aid which is delivered in the area passes through Zanu PF structures as the ruling party and that those not in Zanu PF structures would never receive aid from the government. He then proceeded to force the villagers to sing Zanu PF songs and chant the party's slogans. He dared those who had been aggrieved to report anywhere they wanted as nothing would happen to him.

In some cases, legislators were implicated in the politicisation of aid as reported on 29 December 2019 where close to 500 villagers from Mudzi North convened at Nyamuyaruka Business Centre to receive drought relief rice from the government. The rice was distributed in a partisan manner by a Zanu PF Mudzi North ward chairperson Gilbert Makazhu with the guidance of Mudzi North Legislator. Three MDC supporters were denied the rice and the legislator told villagers that MDC supporters would never benefit from government aid and inputs since their legislators do not recognize President Mnangagwa as the constitutionally elected President of the Republic of Zimbabwe in Parliament. Members of Parliament are expected to act in a manner that unifies communities as they represent every member of their constituency in Parliament. Such behaviour by an MP only serves to divide communities along party lines and promote intolerance.

This manner of discrimination even happens in areas where there are MDC councillors; Zanu PF routinely takes over the distribution of aid. In Umzingwane constituency in ward 7 it was reported that Zanu PF shadow councillor Larvet Dube told villagers during a food distribution exercise that MDC members and supporters were not eligible

to receive food aid and farming inputs. Dube opined that MDC continue to disregard Zanu PF accusing the party of being illegitimate hence MDC supporters did not deserve to receive food from an illegitimate party. Only Zanu PF activists were given food while known opposition activists were denied aid.

In a unique case, an unidentified Zanu PF member apologized to villagers in Bikita East Constituency after he had attempted to politicize aid, only to be informed by the District Administrator's office that the aid was from the government and not the party and was therefore supposed to benefit everyone regardless of their political affiliation. On 10 December 2019, maize seed was delivered at Boora School for distribution. One Kandoro and Chipiwa who are Zanu PF branch chairpersons were then instructed by an unidentified Zanu PF official to inform villagers to attend the distribution clad in Zanu PF regalia. The gathering was then politicized as villagers were made to chant Zanu PF slogans. MDC members who were present then sought clarification of the source of the aid. The local councillor then enquired the source of the aid from the District Administrator's office and the constituency MP and was informed that the aid was from the government and not the party. The unidentified Zanu PF official who had come from Nyika and politicized the distribution then apologised to villagers and the distribution proceeded with everyone getting their share. It is such kind of regret that can build community cohesion and ensure no one is discriminated.

Police brutality and harassment is disturbing as it presents a scenario where the supposed citizens' protectors become a threat to the same citizens. On 12 December 2019, anti-riot police officers assaulted and apprehended vendors and members of the public in Harare CBD at Market Square. In the midst of street battles with vendors, police assaulted labour rights activist, Nation Mudziritwa whom they spotted disembarking from renowned human rights lawyer, Douglas Coltart's vehicle. Mudziritwa sustained serious injuries on the face, back and knees. Among the victims who were apprehended were six males and seven females. The police also forced Mudziritwa into their vehicle and later released him without any charge, before getting to Harare Central Police Station.

In another case, on 24 December 2019, Abel Karowangoro, a Zimbabwe Media Commission (ZMC) accredited journalist working for the Zimbabwe Morning Post was arrested in Harare's CBD. Karowangoro was apprehended by five anti-riot police officers while filming queues of pensioners battling to withdraw their money from banks. The police details took him to Harare Central Police Station where they interrogated and detained him before his

release. In a related incident, Blessing Chidakwa, a journalist with the Herald and accredited with the ZMC was detained by police officers on 25 December 2019 and was forced to delete footage he had recorded of police officers smashing windscreens of commuter omnibuses. Chidakwa was manhandled by three police officers at Roadport bus terminus on Christmas Day. The officers dragged him to where their vehicle was parked and forced him to delete all the pictures he had taken. He did not resist for fear of being assaulted with baton sticks that the police were wielding. He was only released after he threatened to notify the National police spokesperson, Assistant Commissioner Paul Nyathi of the incident.

Politicians were not spared from police harassment as evidenced by a case where, anti-riot police officers harassed MDC ward 43 Councillor, Norman Makondo at Budiro 5 shopping centre on 29 December 2019. The officers who were raiding vendors harassed Makondo for confronting them at the shopping centre. They took Makondo to Budiro police station charging him with inciting public violence, by condemning their operation. Makondo was detained and interrogated for hours before being released.

In another incident, MDC youths threw a party in a local shop in Rushinga at Chimhanda Township in ward 15 on 23 December 2019. After the celebrations, a group of seven police officers interrogated the shop owner on why such an event had been held at his premises. The officers demanded a bribe from the shop owner and one of the officers was quoted saying, *'tipei kamari kuti nyaya iyi ipere'* translating to "give us some money for us to drop the charge". The shop owner refused to pay the solicited bribe.

The brazen lawlessness of machete wielding artisanal mining gangs heightened as one police officer was seriously injured and another murdered by a gang popularly known as "Team Barca" armed with machetes, logs, axes and catapults; in the course of carrying out their duties. This occurred on 28 December 2019 at Good Hope Mine in Muzvezve constituency in Battlefields. The mine is owned by the constituency legislator who authorised Zanu PF youths in the constituency to undertake mining activities in a youth empowerment programme.

Political violence targeted at MDC supporters was reported in December 2019. On 1 December 2019, eight suspected Zanu PF youths visited Daniel Mandlovu*'s homestead in Chiwundura around midnight accusing him

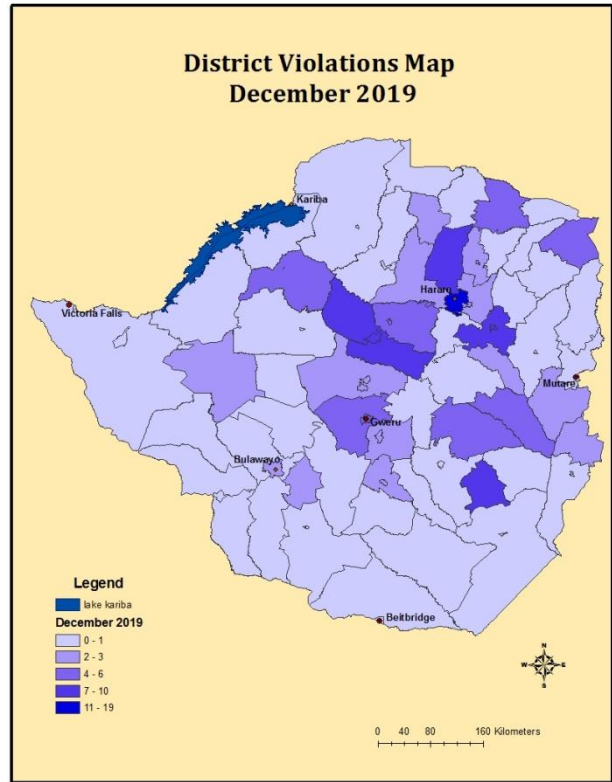
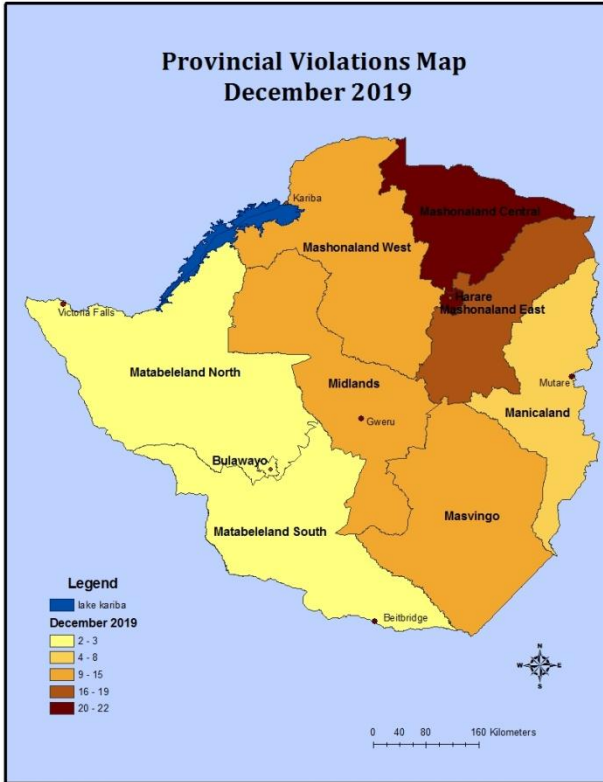
of mobilising villagers to attend an MDC rally which was held at Muchakata Business Centre on 30 November 2019. The eight also accused Mandlovu* of working with unnamed NGO's in Chiwundura which they alleged facilitated community activities in collusion with the opposition party. Mandlovu* was assaulted in full view of his family members by the assailants before they fled into the dark.

On 13 December 2019, a number of MDC youths were attacked by suspected Zanu PF youths in Shurugwi Rural, ward 6 where a by-election was due to take place on December 14. Unidentified MDC youths were allegedly assaulted several times and their fliers burnt by the Zanu PF youths. According to MDC Deputy Provincial Organizing Secretary for Midlands, Moses Mikaeli, the environment became unconducive for their members to conduct their campaign activities. The incident was reported to the police but no arrests have been made so far.

Harassment and intimidation remains common on the Zimbabwean landscape. Civil servants are not spared from this violation. On 22 December 2019 a case of harassment and intimidation was reported in Chakari at Milverton Primary School. Teachers who stay at the school were harassed and intimidated by Zanu PF activists, Pedzisai Chadenga and Collen Chinyani over poor performance after a sizeable number of grade seven pupils dismally failed their 2019 examinations. Chadenga and Chinyani used their political influence to harass the teachers and threatened them with transfers from the school if future grade seven learners failed. The teachers did not report the matter to the police fearing further victimization. Such harassment can further demoralise civil servants who are already disgruntled as a result of their earnings that are not catering for all their needs.

It never rains but pours for Cyclone Idai victims in Chimanimani East who are still living in tents, 10 months after their homes and livelihoods were destroyed by the floods. In September 2019 there were reports of food aid meant for the victims rotting in warehouses and some victims being given food that was past the expiry date. In ward 13, Machongwe growth point, and ward 15 Arboretum Camp, villagers accused the District Administrator's office and an unidentified NGO of distributing disease infected chickens. A woman from the area claimed she had lost 85 broilers worth nearly ZWL\$10,000 after the donated chickens infected her chickens. In response, angry villagers demanded that the NGO be held accountable for these losses.

Dashboard of Statistics



Distribution of violence by type across provinces

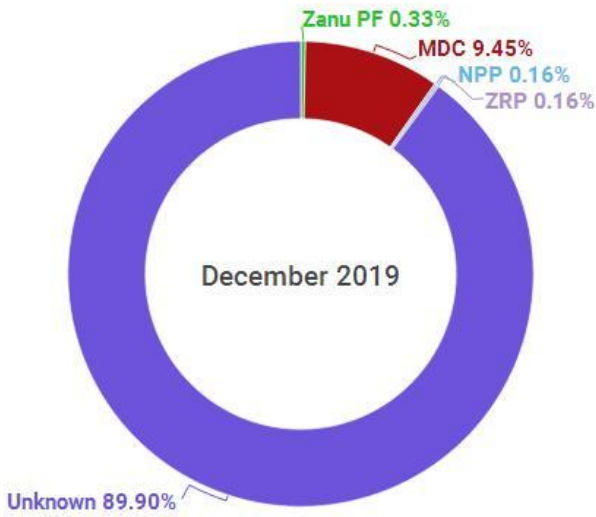
ACTS	Midlands	Byo	Mat. South	Mat. North	Masvingo	Manicaland	Harare	Mash. East	Mash. West	Mash. Central	TOTAL
Killing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Rape/Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kidnapping/abduction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assault	4	1	0	0	0	0	5	0	3	1	14
Theft/looting	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	1	8
Discrimination	1	0	1	1	4	2	1	8	2	7	27
MDP	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	4
Torture	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unlawful Detention	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
Intimidation /harassment	8	1	1	2	6	5	8	10	6	13	60
Displacement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Attempted Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Attempted Abduction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Banned Political Party Mtg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disrupted Political Mtg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	15	3	2	3	13	8	21	19	13	22	119



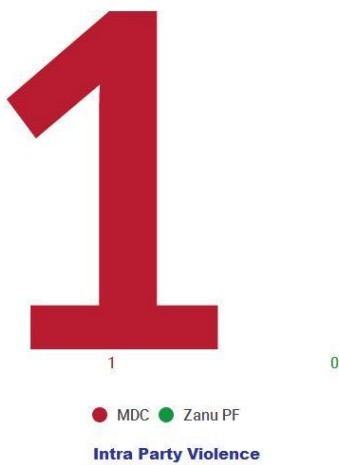
Food and Other Aid Violations



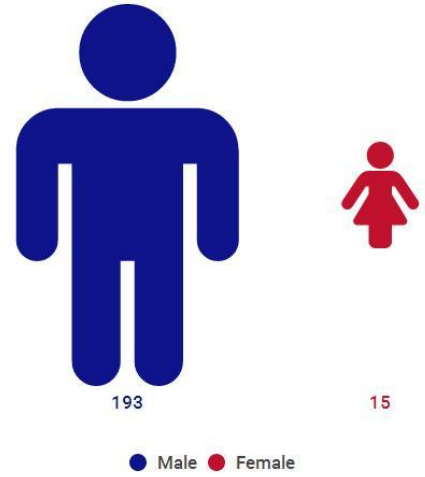
Victims by Gender



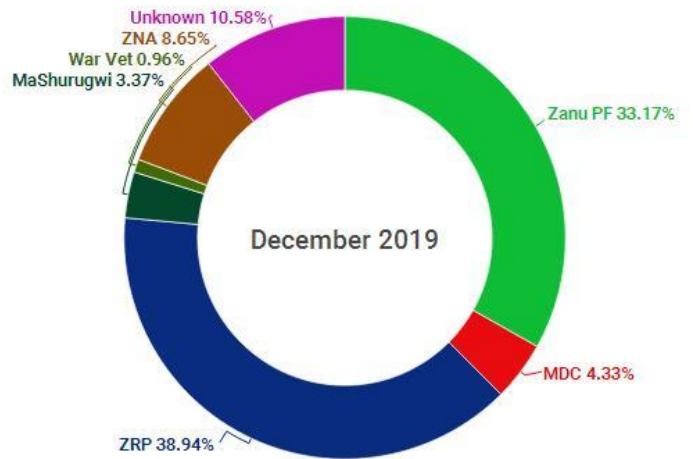
Victims by Affiliation



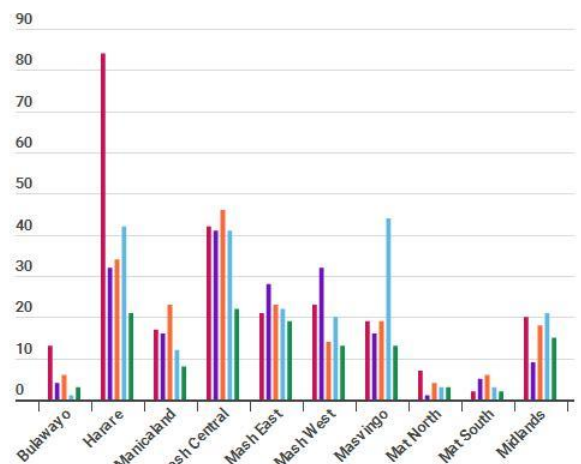
- Male
- Female
- Male PWD
- Female PWD



Perpetrators by Gender



Perpetrators by Affiliation



- August 2019
- September 2019
- October 2019
- November 2019
- December 2019

Violations by Province

Overall Analysis

The economy continues to present challenges for citizens to fully enjoy their lives. In addition to prices of basic commodities being unaffordable, commodities such as mealie meal have become scarce. An article in the Newsday of 23 December 2019 indicated that many retail outlets did not have mealie meal after some millers complained that they were still awaiting registration with the Industry and Commerce Ministry which was proving to be a long process. Such shortages exacerbate the challenges that citizens are already grappling with to put food on the table.

The promises made by the President in his New Year's Eve speech and during the 3rd edition of the Annual Thanksgiving and Dedication Service organised by the faith for the nation campaign to ensure higher productivity in all sectors and create decent jobs in 2020 need to be turned into tangible results; if citizens', especially youth's lives are to be positively transformed. Promises without follow on action will only deepen mistrust of the government by citizens. Still on promises, the MDC president's promises of restoring dignity, promoting development and pushing for change in Zimbabwe should be built on principles of peace and unity and contribute towards nation building.

The increases in school fees will likely result in an increase in school drop-out rates especially among sectors of the community who do not believe in educating the girl child. In some cases, school fees have increased by more than 300%. A case of reference is Mazungunye Secondary School in Bikita where school fees was increased from ZWD50 to ZWD200. Measures need to be put in place to ensure that no child's right to education is jeopardized by such increases.

Communities can easily be divided by the continued politicisation of food and other aid. When fellow citizens continue to be denied what is rightfully theirs on political grounds it only sows seeds of hatred in them and creates perpetual tension in communities. ZPP once again quotes the preliminary report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food that no reference to one's political affiliation should be made when aid is being distributed and that the principle of non-discrimination should be adhered to. Instead of fanning divisions through food and other aid politicisation, the government must ensure that communities are united to proffer solutions to the hardships that the country is facing and work together to ensure safety nets are available for the most vulnerable in communities.

Issues of peace and security also need to be treated with the importance they deserve in Zimbabwe. The continued lawlessness by artisanal mining gangs pose a security threat to citizens especially when they turn on to police who are supposed to protect citizens. The police are also proving to be a threat to Zimbabweans by their continued use of excessive force when dealing with citizens. ZPP implores the government of Zimbabwe to seriously work on implementing security sector reforms as recommended by the Motlanthe Commission of Inquiry.

ZPP December statistics show that police occupied 38% of perpetrators, up from 34.6% recorded in November 2019. This upward trend, if not addressed could result in the police becoming a law unto themselves. ZPP calls for the operationalization of Section 210 of the Constitution that enables citizens to make complaints that involve the security sector. The trend of victim affiliation remaining unknown continued with 89.9% of victims not revealing their affiliation; an indicator of the entrenched fear within citizens.

In order to resolve some of the issues brought to light in December 2019, ZPP calls on:

- The government to earnestly work on reviving the economy.
- Operationalising Section 210 of the Constitution as a matter of priority.
- Those responsible for the distribution of food and other aid to abide by the principle of non – discrimination and ensure every deserving citizen does not go hungry.
- The security sector to find lasting solutions to the artisanal mining terror gangs and prevent further violence and loss of life.

If you are concerned about acts of human rights violations in your community ZPP encourages you to get in touch on WhatsApp numbers: +263 774 883 406 and +263 774 883 417

ABOUT ZPP

The organisation was founded in 2000 by church-based and human rights organisations. The current members of ZPP are Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJPZ), Counselling Services Unit (CSU), Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights), Civic Education Network Trust (CIVNET), and Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ).

ZPP was established with the objective of monitoring, documenting and building peace and promoting the peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts. The Zimbabwe Peace Project seeks to foster dialogue and political tolerance through non-partisan peace monitoring activities, mainly through monitors who document the violations of rights in the provinces.

The monitors, who at full complement stand at 420, constitute the core pool of volunteers, supported by four Regional Coordinators. The Regional Coordinators relate with the national office headed by the National Director and programme officers in various units.