



**ZIMBABWE  
PEACE  
PROJECT**



# **MONTHLY MONITORING REPORT**

**MAY 2019**

**HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**



## Chasing Shadows

The Government of Zimbabwe has reverted to its systematic and coordinated Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and human rights activists attack modus operandi; a path they always take when under pressure. This was most evident when seven human rights defenders (HRDs) were arrested on various occasions at Robert Mugabe International Airport in the month of May.

George Makoni, 38, an Advocacy Officer for Centre for Community Development in Zimbabwe; Tatenda Mombeyarara, 37, Co-ordinator for lobby group Citizens Manifesto; Gamuchirai Mukura, 31, Executive Director of Community Tolerance Reconciliation and Development (COTRAD); Nyasha Mpahlo, 35, Farirai Gumbonzvanda a girls' rights activist and community volunteer with the Rozaria Memorial Trust, Sitabile Dewah of Women's Academy for Leadership and Political Excellence and Director of the Female Prisoners Support Trust Dr Rita Nyamupinga were picked up at the airport between May 20 to 27 on returning from a workshop in the Maldives. The workshop was hosted by the Centre for Applied Nonviolent Action and Strategies.

Government recently on different occasions accused CSOs of regime change endeavours through coordinated demonstrations throughout the country despite Section 59 of the Zimbabwean Constitution clearly providing for the right to demonstrate and petition. It is now apparent that these intimations were orchestrated to herald and justify the persecution of CSOs. The activists' arrest is a clear sign of criminalisation of human rights activism, which flies in the face of democratic society ideals. Government's targeting of activists who attended a workshop whose scope is 'non-violence', is nothing short of chasing mirages and stifling clearly provided for rights. The continued deferment of bail ruling judgement and detention at Chikurubi Female and Maximum security prisons deprives the activists of their freedom and is a form of continued violation and victimisation. We implore the justice system to speedily follow due process so that these Human Rights Defenders are treated fairly.

## 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.*





Moreover, the concerted smear campaign perpetuated by the State through *The Herald*, *The Chronicle* and its surrogate tabloid *The Patriot* and online publication, *Harare Post*, is exposing machinations of the administration. For instance, inferences that ZPP, together with other CSOs have established an organisation meant to spearhead anti-government protests together with the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) are baseless and pregnant with falsehoods with the objective of unduly discredit the named organisations. This clearly exposes that the Mnangagwa administration will not stand down in allowing Zimbabweans' enjoyment of their rights and freedoms. Other organisations mentioned in the malicious article include, the Counselling Services Unit, the Research and Advocacy Unit, the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights and the umbrella body the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum to which all the organisations listed are members. The targeting of CSOs also had *The Patriot* single out RAU and its Senior Researcher Anthony Reeler in an article 'Savanna Revolution-Zimbabweans Beware'. The dates on which Reeler is accused of having run a workshop in Johannesburg are the same dates that Reeler was working in the RAU office in Harare.

The recorded total number of violations declined from 171 to 157 from the previous month. In April the high number of violations were attributed to the demand for contribution to Independence Day celebrations. While taking note of numbers it is even more crucial to note that beyond the numbers there are other issues to be considered like uncertainty, volatility, growing fear and other issues taking place among citizens. The environment is worrying in many different way, particularly the crippling economy biting from all ends making it difficult for citizens to make ends meet.

In May, the major form of violation was harassment and intimidation related to food and other aid distribution. Zimbabwe received below average rainfall in the 2018/19 agricultural season and Cyclone Idai aggravated the situation, increasing the vulnerability of more households with regard to food security. Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare Minister Dr Sekai Nzenza recently highlighted that the situation is not only dire in rural areas, but that 40% of urban area households will also need food aid. Depreciating macro-economic conditions will further impoverish people and they will likely need this aid. Thus it is particularly worrying when aid is politicised, and deserving families are deprived at the expense of political comradeship.

Economic decline continued unabated with inflation at a 10 year high of over 75% (April Zimstats), fuel increased from RTGS \$3.36 to RTGS \$ 4,97 for petrol and RTGS \$3,22 to RTGS \$4,89 for diesel while the RTGS currently keeps shedding value (98% since February





2019) against the United States Dollar. Fuel costs further steepened transport costs from RTGS\$1 to as much as RTGS \$3-\$5 for some routes such as Harare- Chitungwiza. This is a further thorn in the flesh that consumers have to contend with and government sought to address the matter by introducing Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) buses at a fare of 50c. This has resulted in a heightened demand for the buses, yet they fail to mitigate transport needs of the urban populace as the buses are only a few. This has been further exacerbated by the decision to allow the RTGS currency to float freely against the USD and the exchange rate be determined by market forces, with the hope that it matches and subsequently stifles the parallel market. All these factors are severely felt by the consumer as the little they earn is failing to sustain them.

Economic challenges have further heightened the sense of instability in the country. These economic challenges will further incense struggling citizens and likely lead to unrest. Conversely, government has reacted by increasing the presence of the army and police in major cities, further heightening the possibility of a violent confrontation reminiscent of August 1, 2018 shooting of civilians and January 14-16, 2019.

## Highlights

**Politicisation of food and other aid** continues unabated and this trend is sadly on an upward trajectory. Needy people are deprived of food and other aid due to their political affiliation with opposition political parties; on the other hand ruling party members are using the platform to reward their supporters. For instance, on 23 May villagers in Hurungwe West were categorically told that the maize distributed by the Department of Social Welfare was from Zanu PF and Zanu PF members were entitled to receive their allocations first. This was reinforced when party representatives ;Agrippa Musarurwa, Joseph Sande, Lucia Mupfudza, Richard Chagwedera, Steven Makombarume and Richard Matenga were given first preference.

On May 12 in Rushinga Ward 25 a villager was denied registration for food aid distribution by Daniel Kawodza a Zanu PF activist who told the villager to first register under Zanu PF cell structures in order to be included on the list of beneficiaries.

In some instances, villagers are compelled to pay in order to receive aid which is freely provided for by Social Welfare. In Mutasa North Ward 10, Chief Nyamande demanded that food aid beneficiaries must pay RTGS\$0.50 in addition to transport costs that they have already been paying. Villagers were told that paying this fee would ensure they receive the aid. In Chivi





Central at Nyamakwe Business Centre, Ward 16 Councillor Munashe Pwanyai told beneficiaries to pay RTGS\$3 or more in order to receive their aid. Chiedza Muvengi a member of the Ward Development Committee further buttressed this point by stating that they must pay up as they were lucky to get aid in the first place.

**Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)** successfully held its 5<sup>th</sup> National Elective Congress from May 24-26 under the theme ‘Defining a New Course for Zimbabwe’ in Gweru. The event was attended by Chief Nhlanhlayamangwe Ndiweni, Chief Maduna and Ugandan singer and opposition leader Bobbi Wine. The attendance of both chiefs at the Congress has become a source of discussion vis a vis provisions of Section 281 Subsection 2 of the Constitution that prohibits traditional leaders from participating in partisan politics and furthering interests of any political party. The congress progressed peacefully and was characterised by political maturity as losing candidates conceded defeat graciously and congratulated their opponents. This is particularly commendable and a step in the right direction considering that the nomination process was characterised by intra-party violence. However, ZPP hopes that the conceding of defeat was genuine because if it was just at face value then the disgruntled will start to rattle the nest in the future. Advocate Nelson Chamisa won the uncontested Presidency, Welshman Ncube, Tendai Biti and Lynette Kore were appointed Vice Presidents. Treasurer General is David Coltart while Thabitha Khumalo was appointed National Party Chairperson and Job Sikhala as the deputy while Charlton Hwende is the new Secretary General.

**Cyclone Idai survivors** are reportedly having a torrid time in getting needed support from government and related institutions. For example, Oliver Mabaira<sup>1</sup> who lost everything to Cyclone Idai went to the Registrar General’s office in Chimanimani to get replacements for his identity documents. He was told to pay for the birth certificate and when he went to collect it the next day he was told to go and get it in Mutare. The District Administrator’s office had previously made a commitment that survivors would be assisted to get their lost identification documents free of charge.

In another case, two Chimanimani High School students were turned away from school on opening day by Deputy Head Mr Mawacha for attending school without uniforms. Although

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<sup>1</sup> Name changed to protect the identity of the victim





the students narrated that they lost everything during Cyclone Idai the Deputy Head allegedly told them "this is not a cattle herding place" before turning them away.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of May in Zaka North Ward 10, Zanu PF chairperson Piki Pirato told all Ward 10 villagers specifically those that had been affected by Cyclone Idai to travel to Mandhloro Clinic in Ward 5 to receive aid. On arrival the villagers found others gathered there and realised that it was actually a celebration for the victory of Zaka North legislator Robson Mavhenyegwa in the 2018 elections. The villagers were misled in order to boost numbers as Masvingo Provincial Affairs Minister Ezra Chadzamira was in attendance. This angered villagers as they had to endure the day long celebrations without food.

In Chimanimani East Ward 15 survivors expressed concern that they had not received food for quite some time. On May 7<sup>th</sup> the District Administrator John Misi visited the survivors' tents before a ZBC TV interview, allegedly telling the victims to say they were happy before the media interview, despite the fact that they had received neither food nor foam rubbers to sleep on.

**Teachers and Teacher Labour Union Representatives** are reportedly being harassed and intimidated to deter them from a looming strike that they advised government of. In Mutasa Central Ward 15 a war veteran Joseph Mupfururirwa of Nenjerama village in Ward 15 went to Sherukuru Primary to intimidate teachers and deter them from participating in the impending strike. Mupfururirwa and the Headmaster Mr Wonder Dube threatened teachers, stating that anyone who participated in the industrial action would be noted and their name handed over to Zanu PF offices and later sanctioned. The war veteran apparently was reacting to the Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe's notice to go on strike from 3 June.

Zanu PF Mazowe Central legislator Sidney Chidamba on 25 May told villagers during his victory celebrations held at Nzvimbo High School (Ward 11), that his party will respond with violence on demonstrations organised by opposition parties. He further warned civil servants to desist from participating in demonstrations or strikes in order to secure their jobs.

**Vendors, Municipal Police and Zimbabwe Police Service (ZPS)** running battles are a real cause of concern which needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. On 11 May a male vendor was shot by police during vendor raids in Harare Central Business District around Robert Mugabe Way and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Police details were reportedly clearing the area of vendors who





retaliated by throwing stones and police then fired live bullets at the mob. A vendor was shot on the back and sustained serious injuries.

**The economy** is spiralling out of control and it is fast becoming apparent that government does not have a clear plan to a lasting positive solution. On 20 May the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Governor Dr John Mangudya announced that the procurement of fuel by the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) will be done through the interbank foreign exchange market' and not 1:1 as was previously the case. The move, meant to counter those who were abusing the facility also seeks to match the parallel market rate as the interbank was dominated by buyers and a few sellers.

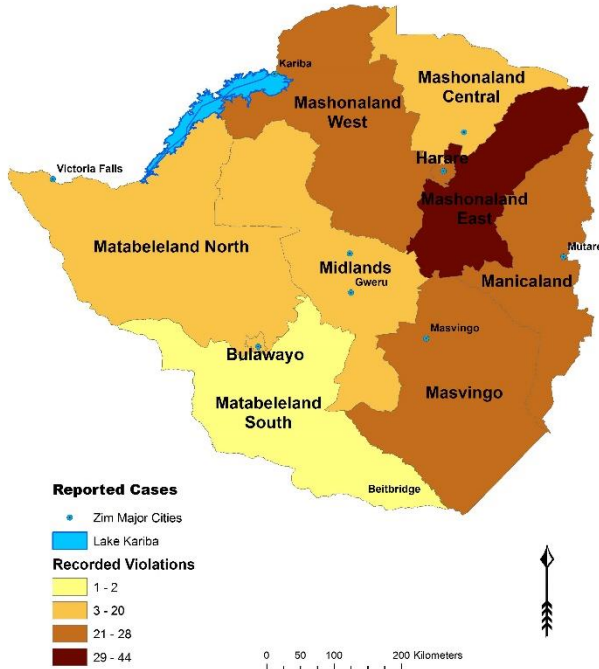
The rapid manner with which the RTGS dollar has lost value means that retailers are fast losing value in the 'local' currency and opting to price their goods in US Dollars, a de-facto dollarisation. Sadly, the majority of citizens are still earning RTGS currency whose value is lost almost on a daily basis and further straining them. Conversely, local producers will likely find the going tough as their products will be priced higher than imports and fail to compete. This means further job losses in the long run. Citizens' woes are exacerbated by rolling electricity blackouts that have intensified in May, further escalating production costs making life difficult for ordinary folk wading in the quagmire of fuel shortages and stiff gas prices often pegged in US Dollars.



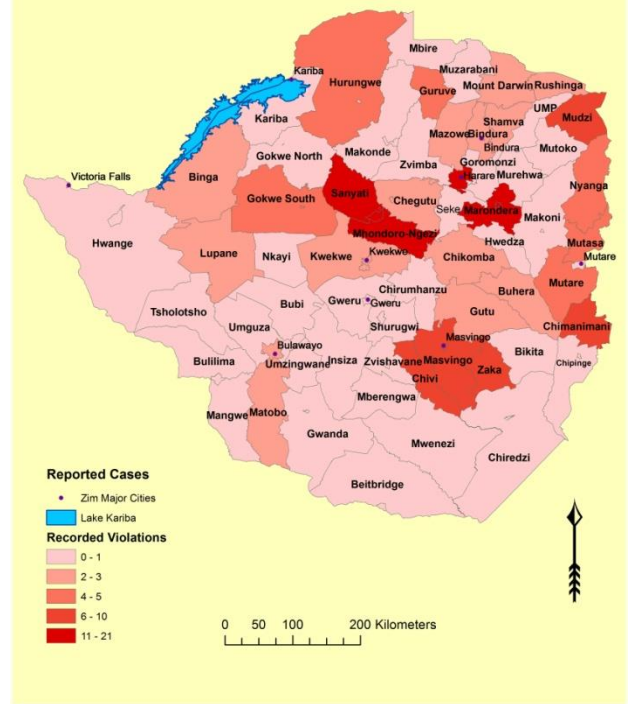


## Dashboard of Statistics

**May 2019 Provincial Violations Map**



**May 2019 District Violations Map**

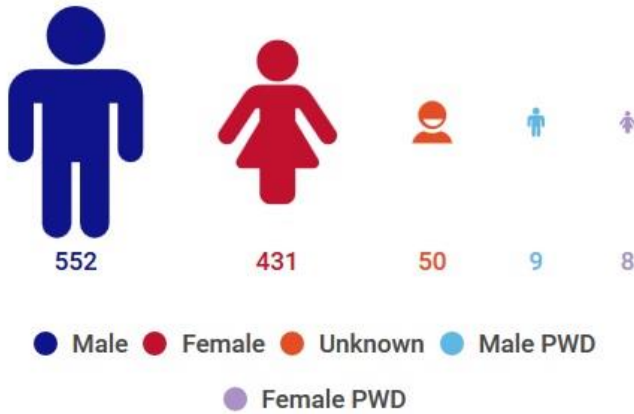


## Distribution of violence by type across provinces

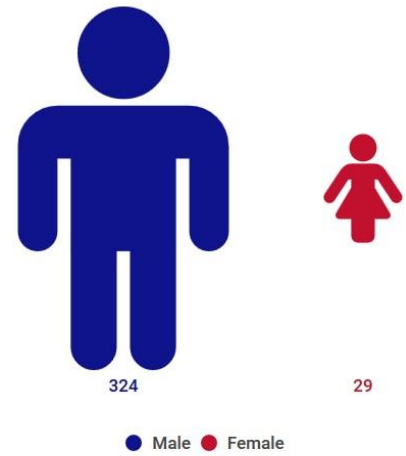
ACTS	Midlands	Byo	Mat South	Mat North	Masvingo	Manicaland	Harare	Mash. East	Mash. West	Mash. Central	TOTAL
Killing	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Rape/Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kidnapping/abduction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assault	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	0	13
Theft/looting	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	6	0	10
Discrimination	1	0	0	1	5	5	2	7	2	4	27
MDP	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	5
Torture	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Unlawful Detention	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Intimidation/Harassment	4	2	1	2	13	11	11	17	13	10	90
Displacement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	1	7
Attempted Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Attempted Abduction	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>157</b>



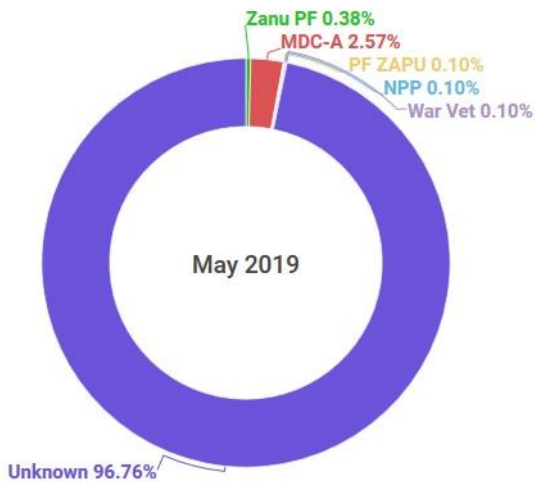




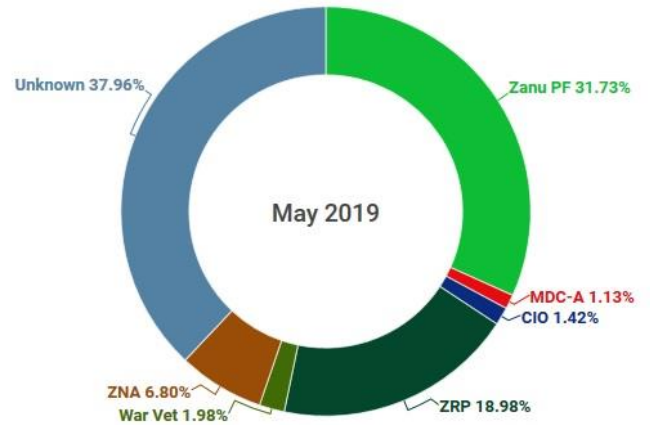
Victims by Gender



Perpetrators by Gender



Victims by Affiliation



Perpetrators by Affiliation

# 2



Intra Party Violence



Food and Other Aid Violations





## Analysis

The month of May has sadly exposed the second administration for its lack of sincerity in terms of upholding the rule of law. The wanton arrest of CSOs, propagation of falsehoods and propaganda in the ruling party aligned media and the continued politicisation of food aid shows there is no difference from the Mugabe administration.

Reports that the Zanu PF cell restructuring exercise currently taking place is being used in awarding food aid is rather disconcerting. Furthermore, we have noted that in some areas there are reports of people being obligated into supplying their information in order to be added as members of the party and therefore get food aid. People's rights to freedom of choice must be respected and upheld.

Of concern also is the victimisation of teachers as well as their union leaders around participation in the looming job action. Threats that teachers will lose their jobs if they participate in the strike are particularly worrisome considering that the economy is at a free fall and jobs are generally hard to come by. The meddling by politicians and war veterans in labour matters of civil servants must be condemned in the strongest terms.

ZPP commends the MDC for successfully holding their elective congress and trust that the peace and stability which characterised the event will permeate to all processes of their party.

It is distressing to note that Cyclone Idai survivors are still being further victimised as they are deprived of food aid which people have donated immensely and are still donating and have a right to. Furthermore, the hurdles they now face in accessing identity documents must be removed as a matter of urgency as promised by government. It is their right to have these documents. We urge the Ministry of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage to act urgently to alleviate the survivors' suffering. Overall, survivors should be relocated to safer, permanent location for them to establish their residences and be given necessary inputs for a start so that they do not rely on aid going forward. On the other hand we also appeal to the conscience of others such as school officials to be understanding and not humiliate and harass school children.

Running battles between vendors, municipal police and ZPS is a clear sign that the economic conditions in the country need urgent redress and also exposes the police's inability to handle volatile situations. The recent shooting of one vendor in Harare may well be a clear indicator that the situation is fast becoming untenable. The use of live ammunition was something particularly addressed by recommendations of the Mothlante Commission, that is "The Police





should be given the skills and capacity to deal with rioters. They should also be trained to be professional and non-partisan. The use of live ammunition as warning shots should be discouraged and should be used only in limited circumstances of danger to public safety”. This particular incident shows the urgent need to have these recommendations implemented to avoid future loss of life.

Additionally, continuing economic challenges will likely trigger disturbances. Therefore government should urgently address the economic challenges to avoid protests. As retailers have effectively dollarised the economy, ordinary citizens are struggling to make ends meet while earning RTGS currency which is losing value almost on a daily basis. This will likely frustrate the citizenry leading to civil unrest. The long and short of it is that government should and must not look at the civil society as enemies lurking in the shadows. An angry, hungry and frustrated Zimbabwean is the one who will eventually rise and voice their frustrations. This can only be tamed by drastic economic reforms which may likely be realised after an all-encompassing National Dialogue.

## **Watchlist**

The continued economic decline is most certainly a matter of concern which must be arrested and contained to avoid any possible triggers of unrest. ZPP will continue to monitor any progress being made and particularly advocate for an all-inclusive National Dialogue to carry the country forward.

We are a month shy of August 1, the anniversary for one of the deadliest days in Zimbabwe’s modern history. Implementation of reforms recommended by the Motlanthe Commission are going on at a slow pace. We urge relevant authorities to ensure much traction is gained in this regard to show sincerity on the part of government in making sure this tragedy does not recur. We are currently monitoring implementation of the Motlanthe Report Recommendations and will soon release a report.

Residents of Masvingo West, Ward 12, Nemanwa Growth Point and King Mine near Mashava were being encouraged to take Mozambican identity documents in order to go to that country and vote is a matter under ZPP’s radar. The fact that people are complicit in a possible scheme of vote rigging in the neighbouring country raises questions which ZPP will continue to interrogate.





**ZPP calls for:**

- An all-inclusive National Dialogue which addresses the quagmire of problems that Zimbabwe is currently in. We are past the issue of political grand standing and expediency. The welfare of Zimbabweans should be a priority for any caring leader. This should take place as a matter of urgency.
- Government to desist from criminalising Human Rights work and perceive CSOs as partners for development. Furthermore, we appeal to the judiciary to speedily give the HRDs their day in court than further victimisation through constant deferments.
- Department of Social Welfare must find a better way of dispersing food aid so that it will not be abused by political parties and ensure that aid reaches intended beneficiaries.

*If you are concerned about acts of violence in your community ZPP encourages you to get in touch on WhatsApp numbers: +263 774 883 406 and +263 774 883 417 and Toll free number 080 80199*

