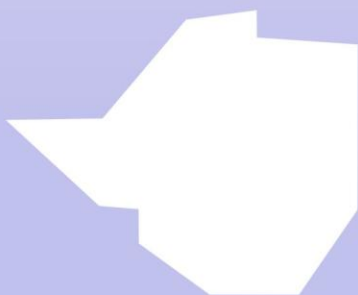




**ZIMBABWE  
PEACE  
PROJECT**



# **MONTHLY MONITORING REPORT**



## Zimbabwe 2018 Elections: Was the voice of the people heard?

### Introduction

The July monthly monitoring report contextualises the eve of the run up to the harmonised 2018 elections. It was characterised by disregard of the political parties' code of conduct. Reports recorded in urban areas were mostly linked to hate speech with social media being a major driver of the hate and inflammatory language. In rural areas reports were about intimidation, harassment and partisan food aid and agriculture inputs distribution. Reports on election day were also dominated by intimidation and harassment.

### Observations

The month of July recorded a total of 266 violations from a reported 203 cases. Cases of intimidation and harassment accounted for 134 of the reported violations. The highest number of violations was reported in Mashonaland Central which had 42 violations followed by Manicaland with 31 violations. The Matebeleland regions remained largely peaceful with Matabeleland South recording only 1 violation in the month of July. Most of the victims were of unknown political affiliation while most of the perpetrators were affiliated to Zanu PF.

ZPP identified cases that were in wilful violation of the political parties' code of conduct as the elections drew closer and on the day of elections. There were more election related threats reported in this period with victims being threatened about voting against Zanu PF. There was an attempt by police and electoral courts to deal with these matters as in the case of Noah Mangondo versus Biggie Matiza where Mangondo asked the court to stop Zanu PF supporters from intimidating his supporters. In another good precedent the courts ordered

## 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), Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) 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.*

Terence Mukupe of Zanu PF to stop his supporters from intimidating opposition supporters. ZPP also recorded cases where police intervened on election day to stop intimidation or diffuse tension but in some cases action was not taken. There seems to be gradual incremental change and willingness by constitutional bodies to deal with intimidation and harassment. However, another observation is that some citizens do not have confidence in the available dispute resolution mechanisms and are fearful of reporting cases of violence to the police. This was demonstrated by the high number of reports to ZPP by citizens who said they feared victimisation if they report to police. The violations committed by opposition activists have been mainly of hate speech, intolerance and occasional physical violence. Political intolerance has targeted women and has been manifested in the tearing of opponents' campaign material. Some traditional leaders are accused of standing as Zanu PF political candidates as well as agents of the ruling party. At Chireya Primary School for example headmen Michael Tupe, Simon Ruvura and Givemore Neruhambe were Zanu PF agents. While the constitution outlaws this it is also a subtle form of intimidation for the electorate when they get into the polling station. There were reports of cases of assisted voting in some areas. Zanu PF activists were accused in most of the cases for coercing villagers into being assisted. In some cases villagers who did not want to be victimised after elections freely offered to be assisted.

### **Election Day**

On election day ZPP received reports of intimidation and harassment particularly in Mashonaland East. In one of the cases, youth officers who were fired by government last year were accused of intimidating people on election day. Zanu PF activists were also accused of 'paddocking' villagers and shepherding them to vote in a particular order for surveillance and purposes of instilling fear. In Headlands a villager said that she feared that if she did not vote and her name was not crossed out from the voters roll, Zanu PF activists would track her down using photographs on the polling station voters roll. Although polling station based rolls are best practise they are a double edged sword in Zimbabwe's case where the electorate is intimidated there is always fear that it is easy to track down people. ZPP noted that while the BVR process was supposed to improve efficiency, it became a tool for intimidation by

activists who preyed on villagers who lacked information and the fact that the ZEC only responded at the tail end of the process compounded the situation. The issue of inclusion of all citizens in the electoral process was another issue of significant concern in the case of persons with disability and women. Persons with disabilities faced various challenges during the registration process and at polling stations. In Chipinge only about 50 visually impaired people cast their votes. Not all polling stations were accessible to PWDs and the visually impaired complained about giving up the secrecy of their vote by being assisted to vote either by their elected assistant or at the polling if the assistant was under the age of 18 years. While at some polling stations vulnerable groups were attended to earlier than everyone else among them people with albinism but this was not standard in all polling stations. ZPP is happy that ZEC after appeals by PWD for disability friendly polling booths introduced for the first time polling booths for those on wheelchairs and those of a short-stature.

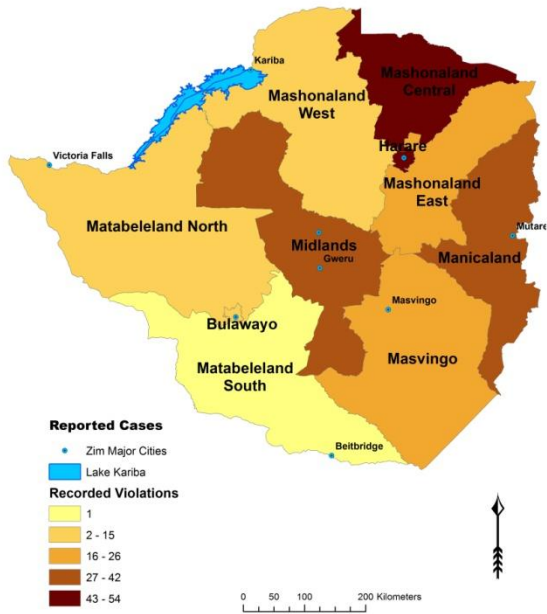
*Breakdown of the Cases and Violations Recorded for July 2018*

	Byo	Hre	Manica land	Mash Central	Mash East	Mash West	Masvingo	Mat North	Mat South	Midlands	Total Cases	Total Recorded Violation s
Intra Party violence		****	*								5	5
Inter Party violence		***		*	*		*			*	7	7
Incitement/Hate speech											0	0
General violence	*	***** *		****	****		**			***	21	24
Corruption											0	0
Victimisation/ Intimidation	*****	***** *****	***** ***** *	***** ***** ***	***** ***** **	*****	*****	***** *		***** *****	105	134
Right to Education											0	0
Discrimination/Foo		*	**	***	*	***	*	*		**	14	14

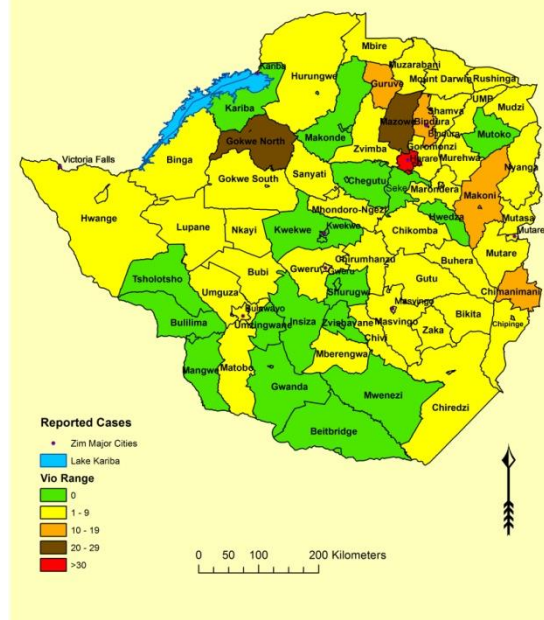
d aid												
Criminal conduct	**	***** *	****	*****			*		*	*****	26	32
Right of the child												
Coercion			*****	*****	*****	***	****			**	25	34
Right to health												
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>266</b>

# Dashboard of Statistics

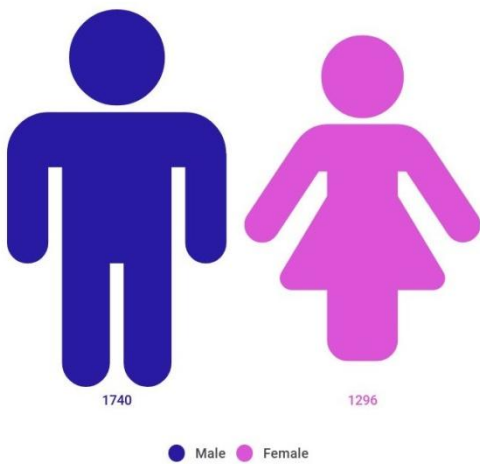
## July 2018 Provincial Violations Map



## July 2018 District Violations Map



## Victims by Gender



## Perpetrators by Gender





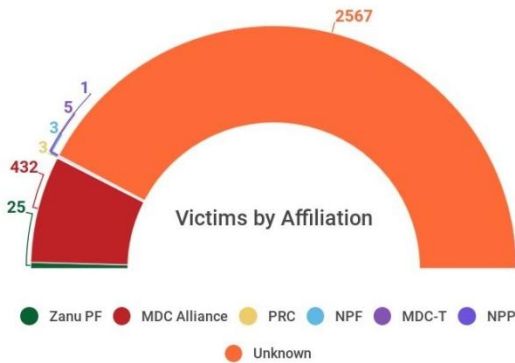


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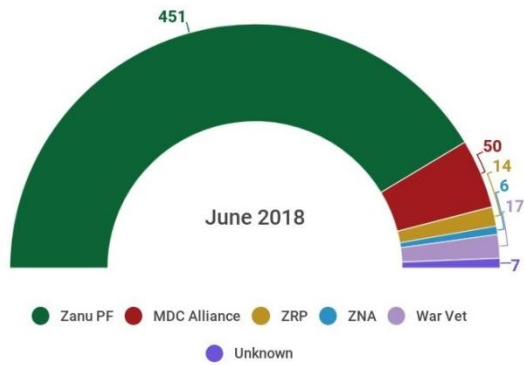
## MARCH 2018 HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS



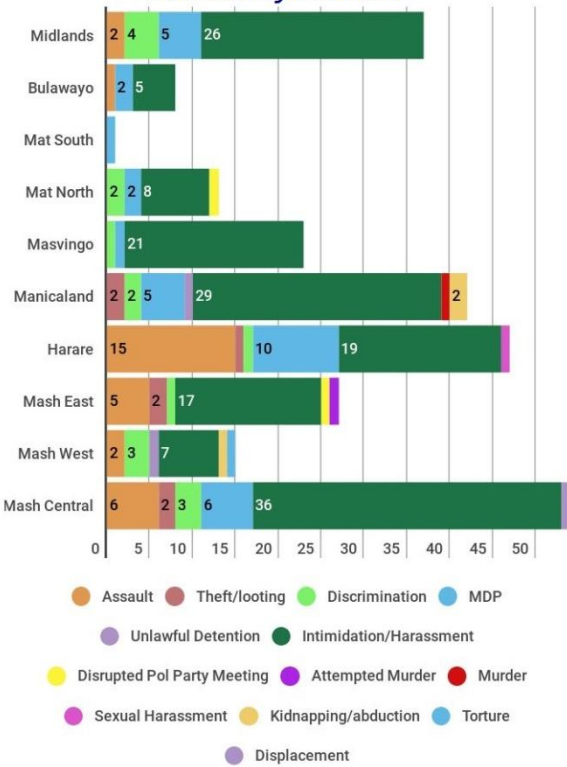
### Victims by Affiliation



### Perpetrators by Affiliation



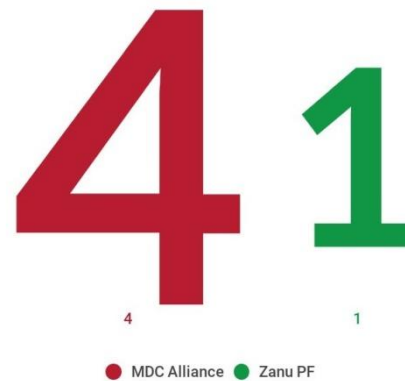
### Violations by Province



### Food and Other Aid Violations



### Intra Party Violence







## Interpretive analysis

A high number of violations in Mashonaland Central, Manicaland, Masvingo, Mashonaland East and Midlands were not surprising. Mashonaland Central remains a trouble province for Zanu PF because of unresolved factional disputes pitting Lacoste and G40. Manicaland, Masvingo, Midlands are swing provinces which often determine who wins the election and the competitiveness in the provinces is a catalyst for conflict and political violence. Mashonaland East is a traditional Zanu PF stronghold and the violations were mainly perpetrated by activists and traditional leaders as well as war veterans.

Increased cases of hate speech signalled high levels of intolerance of divergent political views and were a red flag for potential conflict and violence and proved that the political environment remains polarised despite political pledges and other peace initiatives. The issue of intolerance was also highlighted by the diplomatic community which cautioned against vitriol targeting women as Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Chairperson Priscilla Chigumba became a punchbag for heavy personal insults on social media. Intimidation cases through referencing of past violence left many villagers traumatised in some areas. Perpetrators in their threats used the presidential run-off as a situation to be avoided if villagers did not want a repeat of the 2008 violence. Some war veterans were making threats of war if President Emmerson Mnangagwa was defeated. Villagers were presented with a scenario where the two choices were either a 'Zanu PF victory or civil war'. Some villagers believed this could happen having seen the military intervene to remove President Mugabe in 2017. Others such as resettled villagers were threatened with loss of agricultural land if Zanu PF did not win especially in areas such as Yorkshire 10 in Headlands. Such intimidation and threats create an environment where citizens are unable to freely express their right to freedom of expression and hence exercise their choices freely. In some some rural communities food and agricultural inputs were delivered in the last few days before the elections, while some community leaders distributed these ahead of the elections a large number of others had the deliveries stocked up at places close to polling stations and had informed villagers distributions would be done after the elections a situation that made it possible for food and agricultural inputs to be used to reward and punish.

In the week ahead of the polls villagers in most rural communities reported to the ZPP of meetings that were being held to intimidate and threaten villagers about the importance of 'voting wisely. Some villagers in





Hurungwe West made reports to the police but on realising that they would need to appear in court against their perpetrators they back tracked not that the intimidation did not happen but because they feared reprisals and it was also evident that while the police were committing to deal with cases of violence the trust deficits of the past in state institutions meant to defend the rights of citizens crept in. Most of the perpetrators of these threats are the same characters who perpetrated violence in 2008 and they were either pardoned by former President Robert Mugabe or were never arrested. Some rural dwellers are not yet fully enjoying the protection of the law through constitutional mechanisms because they do not have confidence that these mechanisms work or guarantee their safety. In some cases, there is a lack of awareness of the existence of dispute resolution mechanisms and other institutions at the disposal of the citizens. The absence of alternative platforms on the ground to resolve conflict such as the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission in rural areas has left villagers vulnerable. The terror infrastructure spearheaded by ward chairpersons and traditional leaders in rural areas is alive.

## Recommendations

- ✓ Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission is urged to increase visibility in rural areas to enable victims who are uncomfortable with police to make reports.
- ✓ More support should be rendered to rural communities to litigate
- ✓ Zimbabwe Republic Police is urged to create awareness on how they can protect citizens once they make reports of political violence. They need to work on building confidence in the police because citizens still hold onto what they know from the past.
- ✓ The National Peace and Reconciliation Commission is urged to consider having the signing of peace pledges start at the grassroots where the violence actually occurs before they are signed by the leaders.

## Conclusion

While there was willingness and an attempt by police to deal with violations related to electoral violence, victims continue to have very little faith with the police. As a result intimidation and harassment continued with some villagers being frogmarched to polling stations on election day. The polls therefore had peace of the grave as opposed to genuine peace where citizens are free to express their full rights .





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