



**ZIMBABWE PEACE  
PROJECT**

# Monthly Monitoring Report

September 2024



# Executive Summary

The Zimbabwe Peace Project recorded a total of 180 human rights violations in the month of September 2024. The violations affected over 2175 victims across the country. Prominent among the reported violations were threats of violence (87), assault (7), restrictions to freedoms of assembly and association (19) and freedom of expression (17). Other recorded cases included 11 violations related to restrictions of access to social services, inhuman treatment (7), unfair food distribution (9) affecting 85 victims, and 6 violations of unjustified arrests. ZPP also documented incidents of displacements, rape, hate speech and malicious damage to property that threatens the enjoyment of rights and freedoms as well as peace among communities.

Perpetrators affiliated to the ruling party ZANU PF accounted for 52.52% of the violations committed in September. Other perpetrators include members of the police force (25.22%) and municipal police (4.45%). Traditional leaders contributed 5.04% of the population of perpetrators in September while 4.75% were not belonging to any organised group. Other violations were committed by state security agents (3.86%), members of the Citizens Coalition for Change (2.97%) and members of the Forever Affiliate Zimbabwe (1.19%).

Of the 2175 victims affected, 40.27% were females of which 0,09% were females with disabilities. Men constituted 59.73% of the victim’s population where 0.37% of them were persons with disabilities.

In our section “Ten steps backwards”, we look at how the climate of fear has engulfed Zimbabwean communities and how structural violence is perpetuating this fear. ZPP notes that policy reforms, education and awareness of constitutional values and mechanisms for protection and seeking justice can help improve the situation and by addressing both physical and structural violence, Zimbabwe can move towards a brighter future, where rights and freedoms are protected.

The Zimbabwe Peace Project recommends that the government of Zimbabwe, through relevant ministries and departments, reviews policies and practices that are systematically aiding human rights abuses, investigate and prosecute all perpetrators of human rights violations. ZPP further recommends to the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) to strengthen its commitment of promoting administrative justice in accordance with the Constitution of Zimbabwe by investigating abuses committed in public institutions as well as by other actors.

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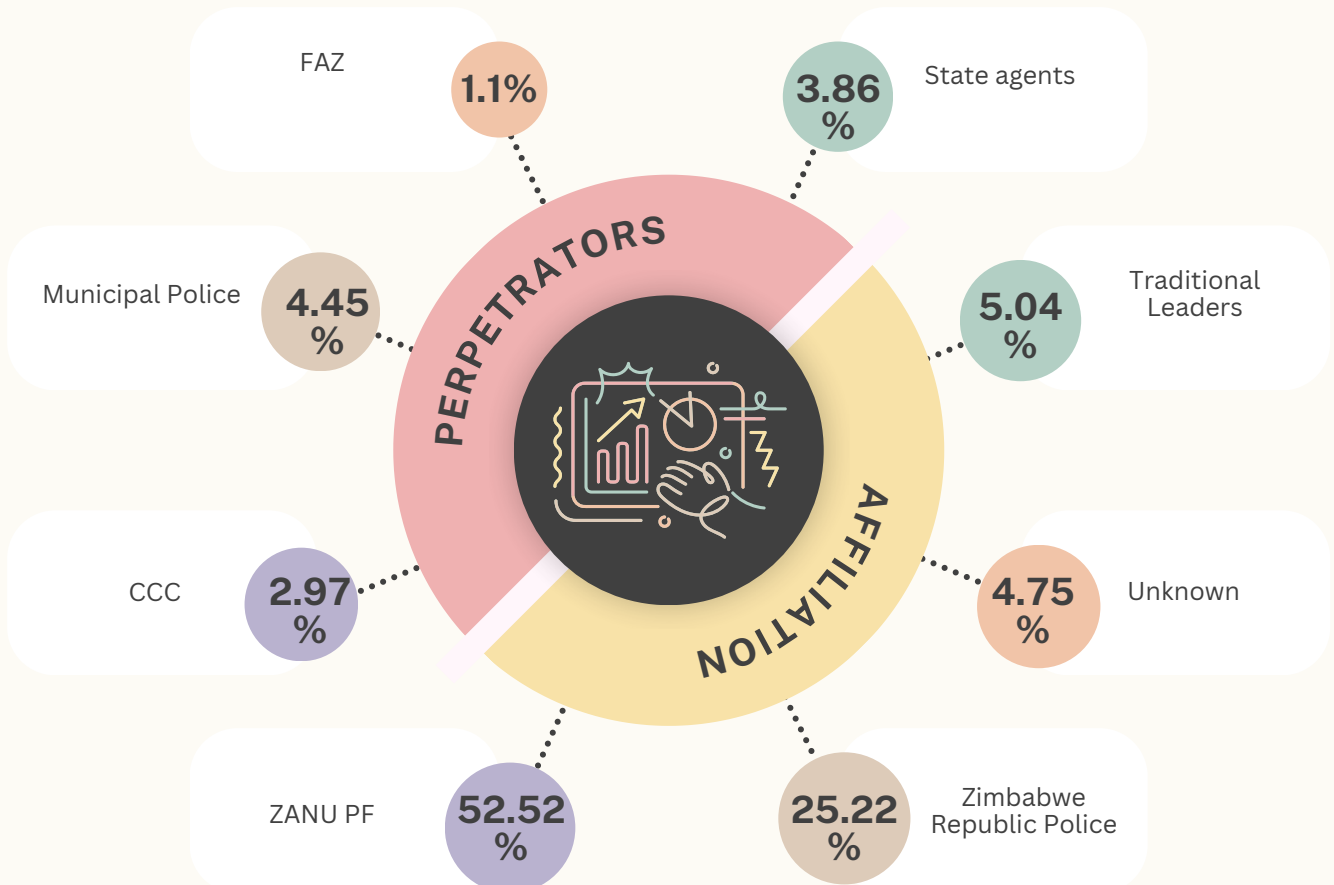
# About ZPP

ZPP is a peace-promoting organisation that uses human rights lenses in peacebuilding work having established that the deprivation and abuse of human rights poses the greatest threat to peace in Zimbabwe.

The organisation was established in 2000 as a project of civil society and faith-based groups in response to the violence and human rights violations that characterised the political landscape of the time. These organisations were the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZIMRIGHTS), Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN), Civic Education Network Trust (CIVNET), Counselling Services Unit (CSU), Zimbabwe Liberators Platform (ZLP) and Non-Violent Action and Strategies for Social Change (NOVASC).

Over the years, the ZPP network of members has evolved as the network welcomed new member organisations while others have developed new thematic interests or have ceased to exist. Current member organisations are the Catholic Commission of Justice and Peace (CCJPZ), Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZIMRIGHTS), Counselling Services Unit (CSU), Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA), National Association for the Care of the Handicapped (NASCOH) and the Women’s Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ).

## SEPTEMBER PERPETRATORS AFFILIATION



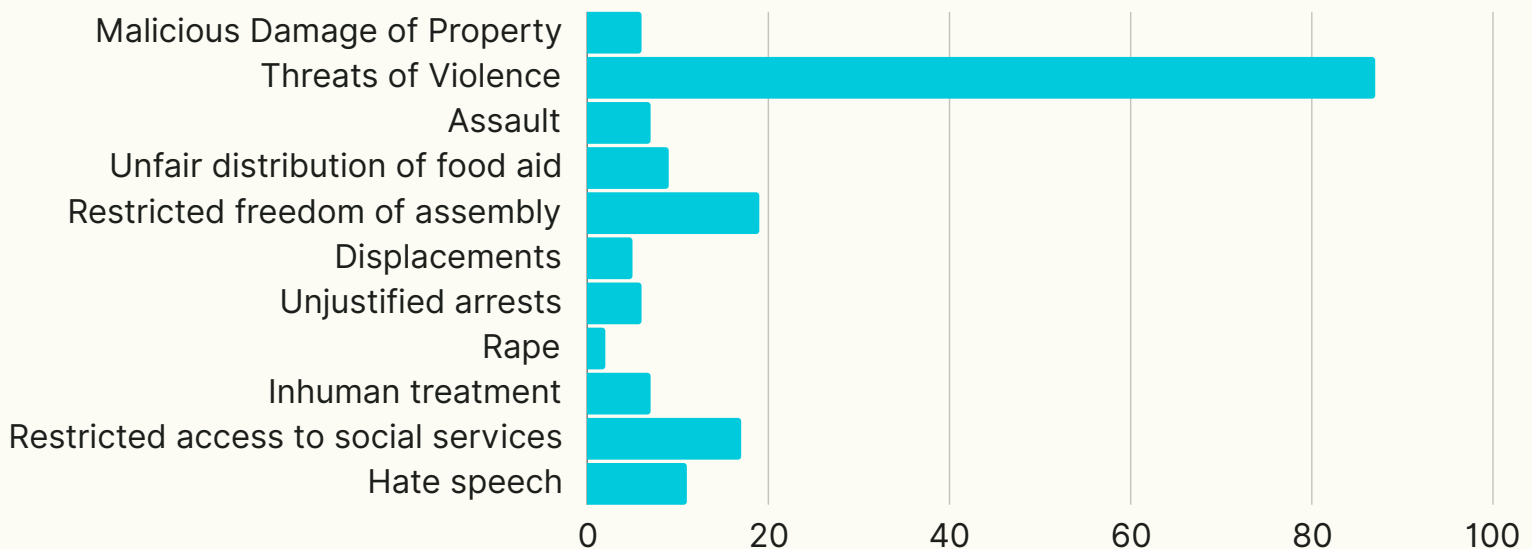
# KEY HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

## Politically motivated threats and violence

In September, the Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) documented 7 cases of assault and 87 incidents of politically motivated threats of violence, primarily involving harassment and intimidation. These violations undermine democratic processes, suppress dissenting voices, and severely restrict freedom of expression and assembly. The key issues of concern observed in September 2024 include politically motivated intimidation, coercion and persecution of citizens. Despite the incidents being recorded across the provinces, most of the incidents occurred in rural areas, often coupled with denial of rights, such as access to food. Traditional leaders, party officials, and activists from the ruling ZANU PF party used public speeches, targeted harassment, and violence to intimidate opposition supporters and citizens perceived to support other parties. Victims were forced to join the ruling party to avoid persecution and access government support schemes, including food aid. In Chiundura Constituency, Midlands Province, three ZANU PF members harassed a female victim, accusing her of being a "traitor" and threatening her family with unspecified action should she continue to 'go by her ways and threaten the independence of the country.' In the Midlands Province again, a male victim was confronted by ZANU PF activists Jacob Zulu and David Paradza and a third unnamed accomplice and was instructed to join the party within a month and warned of eviction and persecution if he failed to comply. The persistent nature of these threats erodes the upholding of basic rights, particularly freedom of expression, as dissenting voices face systemic punishment and reprisal. This leads to sheer terror as victims are trapped in a vicious cycle of fear, reluctant to seek justice, as the mere thought of reporting intimidation and harassment to the police sends shivers down their spines, anticipating merciless reprisal, ruthless vengeance, and unrelenting persecution from perpetrators.

The Zimbabwe Peace Project therefore urges the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) to investigate and prosecute perpetrators without any favour of political affiliation and the government to ensure there are effective protection mechanisms for victims as well as traditional leaders to promote a culture of tolerance and democratic participation in their communities.

## SEPTEMBER VIOLATIONS



## Political bias and exploitation of victims in Food aid



Image source: NewsDay

Emerging trends from the distribution of food aid across the country have displayed worrying trends on consistent political discrimination and maladministration of government sponsored aid. These include the distribution of rotten maize and wheat, leaders and community members falsifying information about the number of family members in beneficiaries' households, and unjustly using people's names but the beneficiaries not getting the food aid. In September only, ZPP recorded 9 incidents of partisan distribution of food aid affecting 85 victims. Some of the trends uncovered are that due to the immense shortage of food aid, victims are further falling prey to other powerful community members who then demand that the received rations be shared with other beneficiaries even if they were not on the list further reducing the amount of food beneficiaries are supposed to get. In one of the 19 villages in Ward 8 in Vungu district, only 14 families have been benefiting from government sponsored food aid in a village of about 65 families. The narration from some of the victims indicate that when a decision to increase

the number of beneficiary households was made, instead of adding from the rest of families in the village, additional beneficiaries from the ruling party were added from other villages because the rest of the families were deemed unfit due to their political affiliations. One of the victims narrated:

“Hatitombopiwe nekuti vanenge vachiti endai munodya kunababa venyu, kana kuudzwa kuti chikafu chirikuuya hatiudzwe, asi dzimwe nguva unotonzwa nevanhu kuti zita rako radedzerwa asi hauwani zvichireva kuti pane mumwe arikutodya nemazita edu” (We are not getting the food rations because they say go and feed from your Father's plate. We are not even told about the distribution but sometimes we are told by people that our names were on the list and were called out but we do not get the food, meaning someone is benefitting on our behalf.)

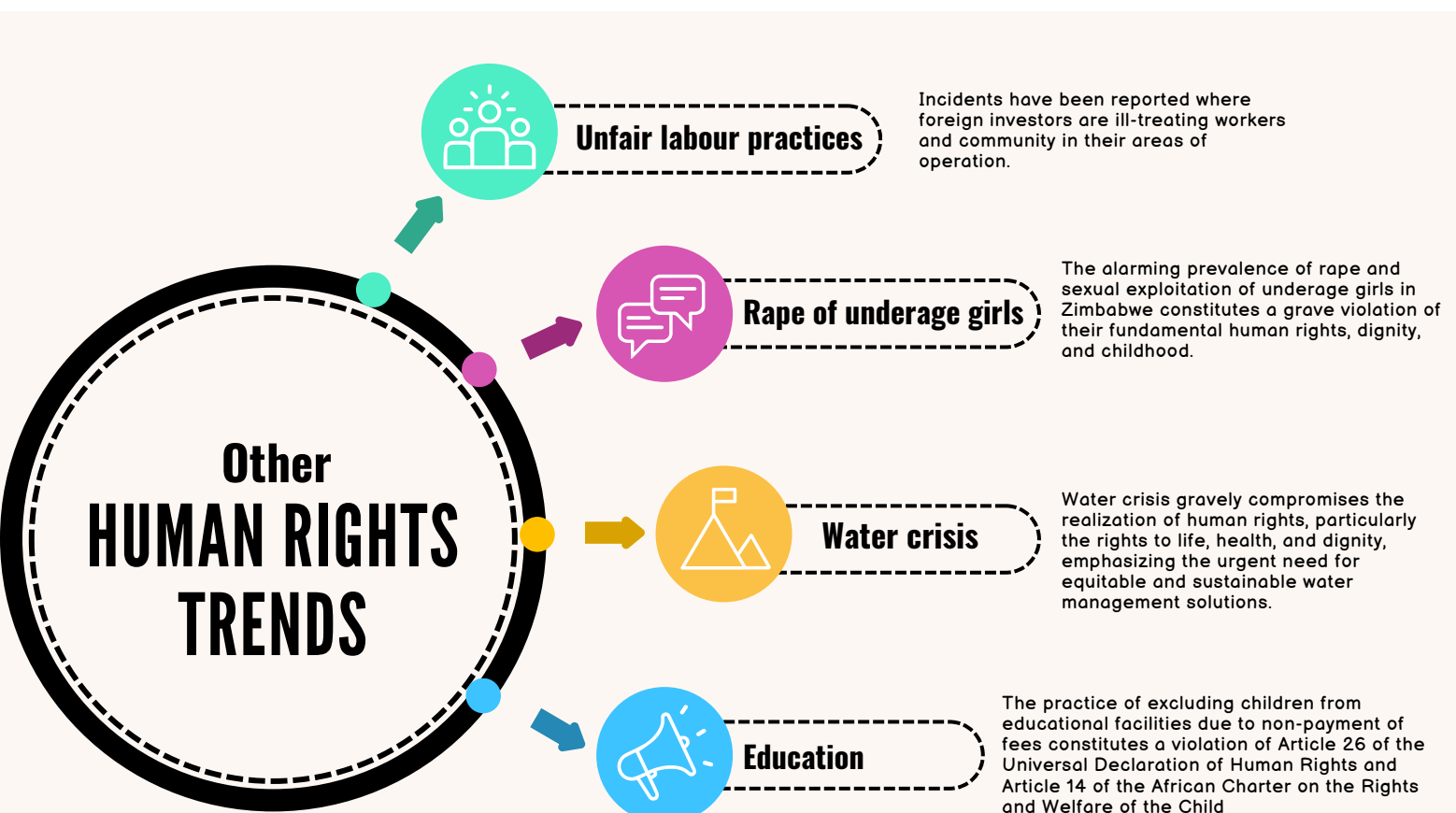
In Mwenezi North, Ward 4, Kraal Head Chitemere of Village 2, discriminately excluded two families from potential beneficiaries of fertiliser under the Pfumvudza supporting scheme stating that they never attend ZANU PF meetings and were not participating in the party activities. He declared the seedling program was for ruling party supporters only.

The families, facing a hostile environment, requested a letter from Chitemere to relocate to other villages but were denied, labelling them CCC members and claiming their movement to other villages would negatively impact others.

In other villages, ZPP has noted that traditional leaders are unjustly coercing beneficiaries of government aid for the vulnerable to participate in infrastructure rehabilitation programs casually termed 'food for work' programs. These have been noted in Vungu district in Midlands, Masvingo North, Bikita East, Gutu Central and Mutare North among others. In Ward 10, Mutare North in Manicaland, kraalhead Phaniel Hama Marange is leading the villagers who benefit from the social welfare distributed food aid in making damaged roads. The villagers mainly work from 7 am to 9 am with bare hands and using their own tools such as shovels, wheelbarrows and hoes. Reports also state that villagers are fined US\$1 should they absent themselves. In a similar incident in Bikita South in Masvingo, villagers who wanted to benefit from food aid were assigned duties under the food for work program and worked for two months but have not received the promised aid.

The Zimbabwe Peace Project notes with concern how the unfair practices and political bias in food aid for the vulnerable undermines the integrity of citizens and exacerbates vulnerability among already marginalised communities.

ZPP strongly recommends the Parliament of Zimbabwe to work closely with the Ministry of Social Welfare to investigate and review the processes of distribution of food aid to curb political bias and mismanagement.



# Towards sustainable peace in Zimbabwe



*ZPP National Director Ms Perlagia Kapuya (3rd from left) pose for a photo with ZHRC Chairperson Ms Jessie Majome (fourth from left) and staff members from both organisations.*

The Zimbabwe Peace Project commends the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) for its dedication to advancing human rights in Zimbabwe. At a recent meeting, Chairperson Jessie Fungai Majome emphasised the importance of collaborative efforts in safeguarding human rights, noting that they are fundamental to life and death, and thus, demand utmost priority. Chairperson Majome highlighted the Constitution of Zimbabwe's provision for human rights and the commission's commitment to promoting these rights. The ZHRC also reaffirmed its pledge to enhance public accessibility and strengthen its role as a Public Protector, combating abuse of power and maladministration by state and public institutions through its Administrative Justice Unit.

ZPP commends the commission's commitment to enhancing engagement with the public to ensure accountability and transparency. In 2023, the commission reported that it received 815 human rights violations complaints and 496 cases through the Administrative Justice Unit, and that through community outreaches, the numbers continue to grow.

The Zimbabwe Peace Project acknowledges the ZHRC's efforts and looks forward to continued collaboration in strengthening human rights accountability mechanisms.

# 10 Steps backwards

## The climate of fear discourages an active citizenry

Fear and over-politicization of government programs severely undermine the enjoyment of freedoms and hinder community development. When citizens live in fear of persecution, arrest, or retribution, they are reluctant to exercise their fundamental rights, such as freedom of speech, assembly, and association. This climate of fear stifles dissenting voices, suppresses creative expression, and discourages active citizenship.

In Buhera, a victim who had suffered from continuous exclusion from food aid based on political bias was asked if she had made any formal complaints about her predicament to the relevant authorities and she expressed a deep sense of fear:

“Iii zvinotyisa zvekuti unenge uchifunga kuti manje ndikataura ndinozogara sei munzvimbo mevaridzi nekuti dzimwe nguva vanhu vanotofa.” (I fear that if I say something, how will I live in their area because sometimes people die.)

Moreover, when government programs are overly politicised, development initiatives are often hijacked to serve partisan interests rather than community needs. This leads to inefficient allocation of resources, corruption, and unequal access to essential services.

As a result, communities in Zimbabwe are denied the benefits of inclusive and sustainable development, and the divide between the ruling elite and the marginalised populations widens. Ultimately, the entrenchment of fear and politicisation erodes trust in institutions, undermines social cohesion, and perpetuates cycles of poverty and inequality as people are not free to demand justice and actively participate in community development.

“*Iii zvinotyisa zvekuti unenge uchifunga kuti manje ndikataura ndinozogara sei munzvimbo mevaridzi nekuti dzimwe nguva vanhu vanotofa.*” (I fear that if I say something, how will I live in their area because sometimes people die.)

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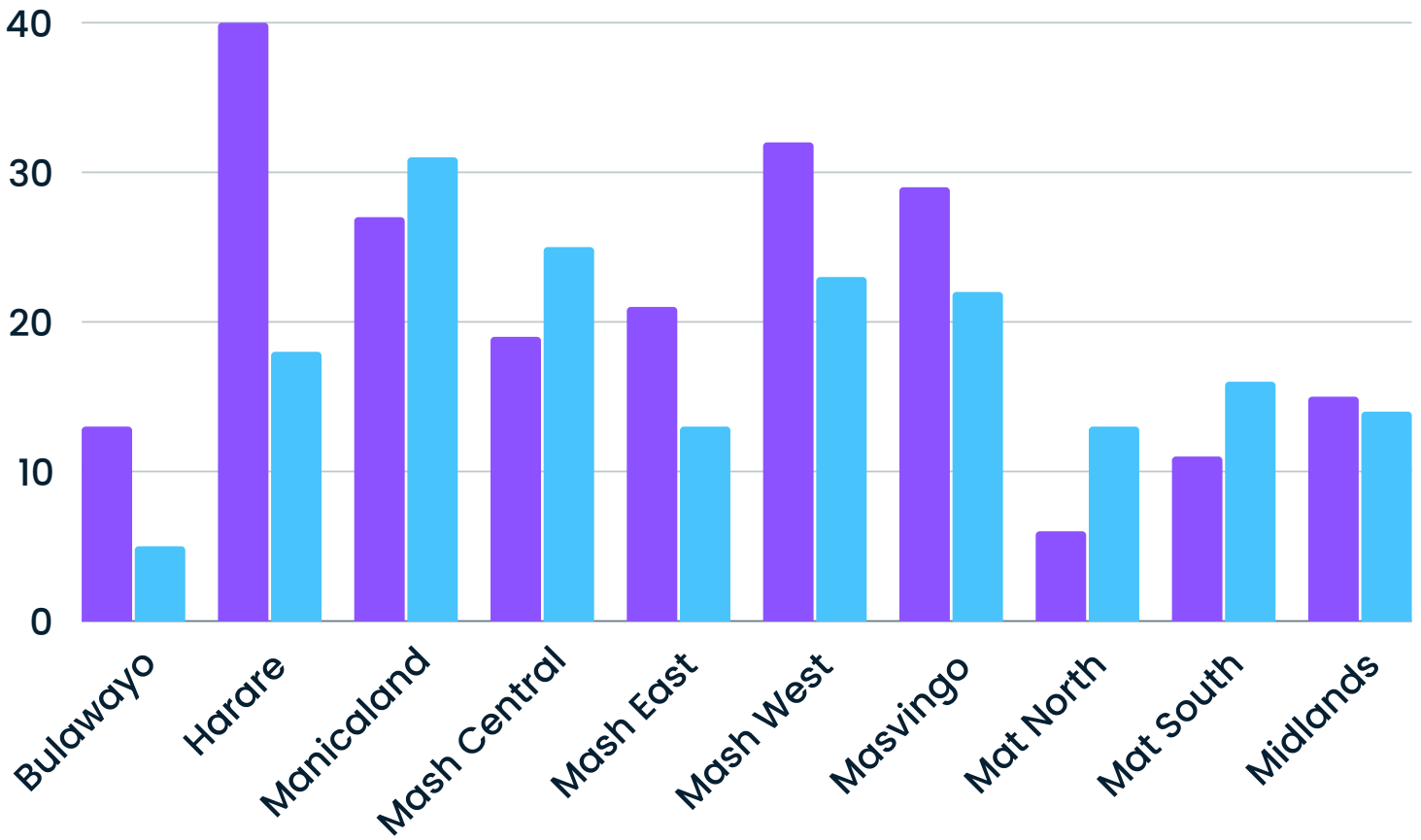
Report Social, Political, Economic,  
Civil and Cultural violations in Zimbabwe.





# PROVINCIAL OUTLOOK

AUGUST SEPTEMBER



## Midlands

The province recorded 14 human rights violations in September. There were a huge number of incidents where opposition members faced harassment and intimidation for being non-ruling party members. In one incident, a victim who is a member of the 'Blue Movement' associated with Nelson Chamisa, was assaulted by six people who are believed to be ZANU PF youths at Gambiza business centre. It is suspected that the victim was assaulted for confronting a local chief and demanded to know why opposition members were denied access to food. In another incident, a victim was instructed by ZANU PF's Clemence Chatumba to defect from the Blue Movement to ZANU PF so that her family could be considered in all government food aid programs but will face consequences if she defies the order. These incidents reflect a broader pattern of repression, where dissenting voices are silenced through violence, intimidation, and manipulation. Other incidents include denial of food aid due to political discrimination and violation of the right to education.

## Matabeleland South

The situation in Matabeleland South, Zimbabwe, is dire. The province recorded 16 human rights violations amidst severe water scarcity and food insecurity. This has resulted in a devastating impact on education, with schools reopening to a low turnout due to parents struggling to pay fees. The economic difficulties are so severe that hunger is rampant, affecting both humans and livestock. Key human rights concerns include the Right to Education, Right to Food and Water and the need to ensure economic security as the crisis is exacerbating poverty, making it difficult for families to meet their basic needs. This situation is unacceptable and requires urgent attention from local authorities and international organisations in order to recognize the inherent dignity and worth of every individual and work towards upholding their human rights, especially in times of crisis.

## Matabeleland North

Matabeleland North witnessed human rights abuses, with 13 violations documented in the reporting period affecting 37 people. These violations encompass intimidation, discrimination, and unlawful arrests of citizens. Two victims were assaulted and unlawfully detained at Jotsholo Police Camp, a sub-station of Lupane ZRP police post following disagreement with police officials on motorcycle licences. Village heads in Binga North received threats purportedly from ruling party officials that if they are supporting opposition parties their allowances would be withheld in October. Tsholotsho's rural areas face severe water shortages, exacerbated by the El Niño-induced drought, leaving communities vulnerable to starvation. In a case of political interference, the District Development Coordinator for Binga North Mr. Land Siansole Kabome, urged chiefs to safeguard the ruling party's interests and discourage opposition activities. These incidents are part of a broader pattern of human rights abuses in Zimbabwe, where the rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly have been severely restricted.

## Harare

In Harare, ZPP recorded 18 violations, down from 40 last month owing to the surge in unjustified arrests that occurred in July and August ahead of the 44th SADC Summit. The violations recorded in September included threats of violence, human rights concerns related to service delivery and denial of the right to education as several schools turned away students over non-payment of school fees. Several suburbs such as Glenview North have witnessed filthy water running in the taps and have resorted to the constrained boreholes across the city, further raising concerns about the citizens' need for portable water.

## Masvingo

In Masvingo, Zimbabwe, 22 human rights violations were documented. These incidents include harassment, intimidation, and forced participation in ruling party events and political discrimination on food aid distribution. Other violations included forced labour where in Bikita South and Masvingo North, villagers were coerced into joining the food for work program, toiling for over five hours daily for two months without receiving any food aid. There was also political intimidation where Mr. Court Zevezai, an assistant to the Member of Parliament for Bikita East, publicly declared civil servants who don't support the ruling party a threat, striking fear into the community. Incidents of coercive participation were also recorded where village heads have been forcing residents to attend ruling party meetings and join party structures to access government-sponsored aid. These actions undermine the fundamental rights of Masvingo's citizens, perpetuating a culture of fear and oppression. Similar incidents have been reported in other parts of Zimbabwe, highlighting the need for urgent attention to address these systemic human rights abuses.

## Mashonaland East

Mashonaland East province has seen a decline in human rights abuses, from 21 to 13, but the situation remains concerning. Unfair food aid distribution has led to conflicts among citizens, highlighting the desperation and competition for limited resources. Incidents of Intimidation and discrimination were recorded at Zihute hall, where Lovemore Muteyebani, a ZANU PF official, incited violence against opposition supporters in ward 30, specifically targeting those affiliated with the CCC. In a different incident, a male victim was assaulted for wearing a ZANU PF T-shirt. Incidents of political bias and discrimination have also been recorded regarding food aid distribution demonstrating a worrying trend of politicisation and manipulation of food aid, exacerbating existing tensions and vulnerabilities. The situation in Mashonaland East mirrors broader regional challenges where communities face precarious food supply situations due to the El Nino induced drought. In Zimbabwe, ensuring equitable access to food aid and addressing human rights abuses is crucial. The government must prioritise impartial distribution of resources, protecting vulnerable populations from exploitation and intimidation by ensuring there is impartial food aid distribution.

## Mashonaland West

23 human rights violations were recorded in Mashonaland West Province. Residents in Karoi are faced with a water crisis, relying on unhealthy streams for drinking water, sparking typhoid and cholera fears. Food aid distribution in Kariba has been contentious, as beneficiaries' selection is biased towards ruling party supporters.

## Mashonaland Central

In Mashonaland Central, human rights violations have increased to 25 incidents, up from 19 in August. The region is experiencing severe water shortages due to drought, leading to concerns of conflicts over this essential resource. Alarming, students have been chased away from school in several incidents. There have been incidents of forced contributions and discrimination where village heads under Chief Bushu are coercing households to contribute \$1 each towards a ceremony for rainmaking. Those who refuse face summons to village and chief courts. Three opposition members have suffered political discrimination, denied access to food assistance due to their activism and influence in the area. Ruling party officials have also been using hate speech to intimidate opposition supporters, stating that "there is no room for traitors in Chawarura" and that President Mnangagwa's government won't waste resources on "traitors." This rhetoric injects fear into the community.

## Bulawayo

The province of Bulawayo saw a decrease in violations, from 13 last month to 5 this month. However, a devastating incident in Pelandaba West highlighted the dire consequences of the ongoing water crisis. A tragic accident occurred when a young girl, an Early Childhood Development (ECD) student, fell into an unprotected well in Pelandaba West. Despite rescue efforts, her body was only retrieved after nearly an hour. This heartbreaking incident underscores the lethal risks posed by the proliferation of unprotected wells, which have become ubiquitous due to the water shortage. The incident serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for authorities to address the water crisis and ensure the safety of Bulawayo's residents, particularly vulnerable children.

# Report Human Rights Violations



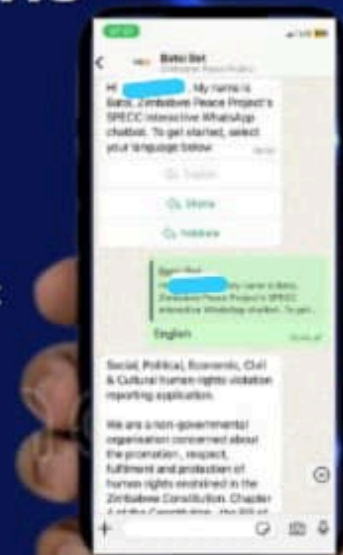
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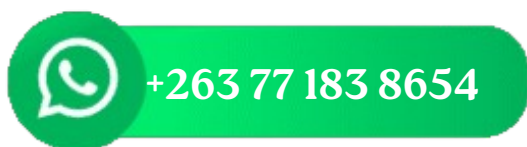


## Manicaland

Manicaland province in Zimbabwe has witnessed a slight increase in human rights violations, with 31 reported incidents this month, up from 27 last month. The most alarming cases include the rape of a 5-year-old girl and the murder of a grade 7 student, who was brutally thrown into a borehole at his grandfather's homestead in Headlands. Other incidents of human rights violations include sexual assault and rape, unfair labour practices and inhuman treatment recorded at Max Mind Investment, a Chinese-led company in Mukwasi Buhera, coercion where ZANU PF officials in Dora rural area have been demanding \$20 from cash-strapped members for the party's upcoming conference. Other violations include abuse of power and administrative justice by members of the Zimbabwe Republic Police in Muzokomba and political discrimination where only community members affiliated with a ZANU PF section supporting Mrs. Mabika Chitima were beneficiaries of a cash-for-cereals program in Chipinge urban ward 6. These incidents highlight the need for urgent attention to address the rising human rights violations in Manicaland province

## Concluding Note

The Zimbabwe Peace Project's latest findings paint a concerning picture of persisting human rights violations across Zimbabwe. The reported incidents of harassment and intimidation, extortion, abuse of power, and political discrimination underscore the undesirable human rights situation in the country. ZPP remains deeply concerned about increased politicisation of food aid and other essential services, persistent intimidation and harassment of opposition supporters and exploitation and abuse of vulnerable populations. Therefore, ZPP calls on the government of Zimbabwe to ensure impartial distribution of food aid and services and for law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute human rights abuses. Equally, political parties should promote peaceful coexistence and tolerance and prioritise human rights protection and promotion. ZPP reminds all citizens of Zimbabwe that there is an increasing need for collective efforts to address Zimbabwe's deepening human rights crisis and ensure a peaceful and just society for all. Citizens are encouraged to report human rights violations to the Zimbabwe Republic Police or file complaints to the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission



Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission