



Monthly Monitoring Report

AUGUST 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August 2025, the Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) documented 121 human rights violations affecting 3,099 victims across the country. Of these, 1,563 were women, of whom 50 have disabilities, while 1,536 were men, of whom 29 have disabilities.

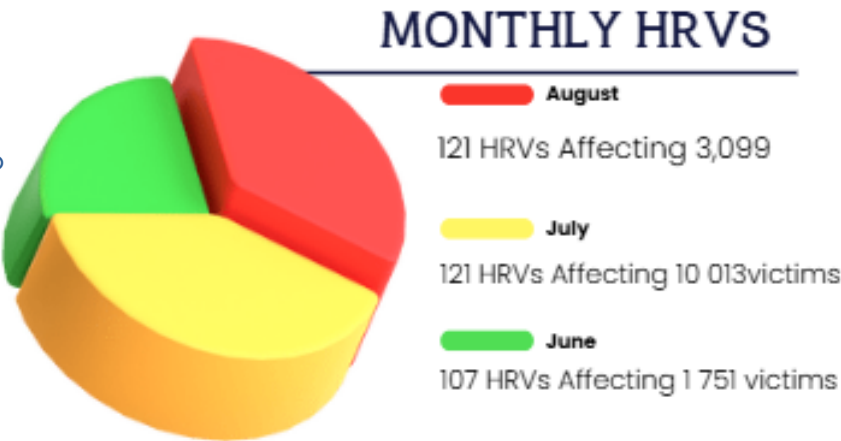
The violations reveal the deep and often invisible harm caused to individuals and communities. Victims were subjected to threats of violence, assaults, inhuman treatment and forced displacements, each leaving long-lasting scars on dignity, security, and social cohesion. Restrictions on freedoms of assembly, association, expression, and access to social services further entrenched a climate of fear and exclusion, while incidents of hate speech and malicious property damage deepened divisions and trauma.

The majority of perpetrators were affiliated with the ruling ZANU PF party, accounting for 44.4% of documented violations. Within this group, party leaders (26.1%) and ordinary members (18.3%) were the main actors. Other perpetrators included local authorities (15.2%), traditional leaders (14.4%), and the Zimbabwe Republic Police (12.5%). Government officials contributed 7%, school authorities 3.1%, religious leaders 1.2%, Citizens Coalition for Change leaders 1.2%, and the Zimbabwe National Army 0.4% were also implicated. In 0.8% of cases, perpetrators could not be linked to any known group.

At the provincial level, violations were widespread but most pronounced in Masvingo (26) and Manicaland (22), followed by Midlands (19), Mashonaland West and East (14 each), Mashonaland Central (9), Bulawayo (7), Harare (6), and Matabeleland North (4). ZPP observed that across provinces, beneficiaries of government schemes were coerced into contributing to Grain Marketing Board reserves. The forceful implementation, extending even to poor households and non-beneficiaries, risks deepening food insecurity as traditional leaders demand contributions beyond GMB’s stipulations.

In the section Towards Sustainable Peace in Zimbabwe, we look at the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission’s statement condemning enforced disappearances as a grave violation of fundamental rights, including the right to life, liberty, and dignity. However, we also highlighted how the efforts could be improved by reference to specific and updated data on current trends and victims of enforced disappearances.

This report highlights that human rights violations in Zimbabwe are systemic, creating fear, silencing dissent, and targeting vulnerable groups, therefore there is a need to take action to ensure there is accountability, strengthen protections for freedoms, and promote inclusive community healing and reconciliation.



ABOUT ZPP

The Zimbabwe Peace Project, ZPP, is a peace-promoting organisation that uses human rights lenses in peacebuilding, having established that the deprivation and abuse of human rights pose 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).

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**Report
Human
Rights
Violations**

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HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION

In August 2025, ZPP documented 29 human rights violations across different communities, with the majority involving threats of violence, harassment, and intimidation. These violations targeted ordinary villagers and opposition supporters, and were often perpetrated by political actors, traditional leaders, and ruling party officials. The incidents highlight a disturbing pattern where coercion and fear are being systematically deployed to silence dissent and enforce political control.

At a ZANU PF meeting in Murewa North Ward 30, the Member of Parliament for Murehwa North Daniel Garwe, threatened villagers with physical harm through inflammatory statements that likened opposition supporters or anyone seemingly supporting former ZANU PF member Blessed Geza to pests to be “mashed by hand.” This statement invites violence against opposition supporters and sympathisers of Blessed Geza by other perpetrators. During the Rwandan genocide, the Tutsis were referred to as cockroaches, and such reckless statements by someone in authority have potentially chilling ramifications if his supporters take them seriously. . Such threats undermine the right to freedom of opinion, expression, and association, guaranteed under Articles 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Further, the use of state-linked programs such as National Heroes’ Day celebrations as tools of coercion also raises serious concerns about discrimination and the denial of equal protection before the law. In Goromonzi South’s Ward 25, ZANU PF leaders including Bridget Musikavanhu, Antony Chisale, and Gilbert Njanji compelled villagers to pay USD \$2 towards Heroes Day celebrations, threatening those who could not afford to pay with eviction from land and vending stalls. 3 community members who resisted were singled out, accused of being sympathisers of opposition parties and were threatened to be evicted from their vending stalls. Such harassment and intimidation reinforce the weaponisation of livelihoods against political dissent. Similarly, in Hwiru, Ward 34 of Gutu Central, preparations for a community food festival were disrupted when a government official and committee organisers were harassed by ruling party district leader identified as Mr Masara, who insisted that no activity could proceed without ruling party approval exposing how traditional institutions are being subordinated to partisan control.

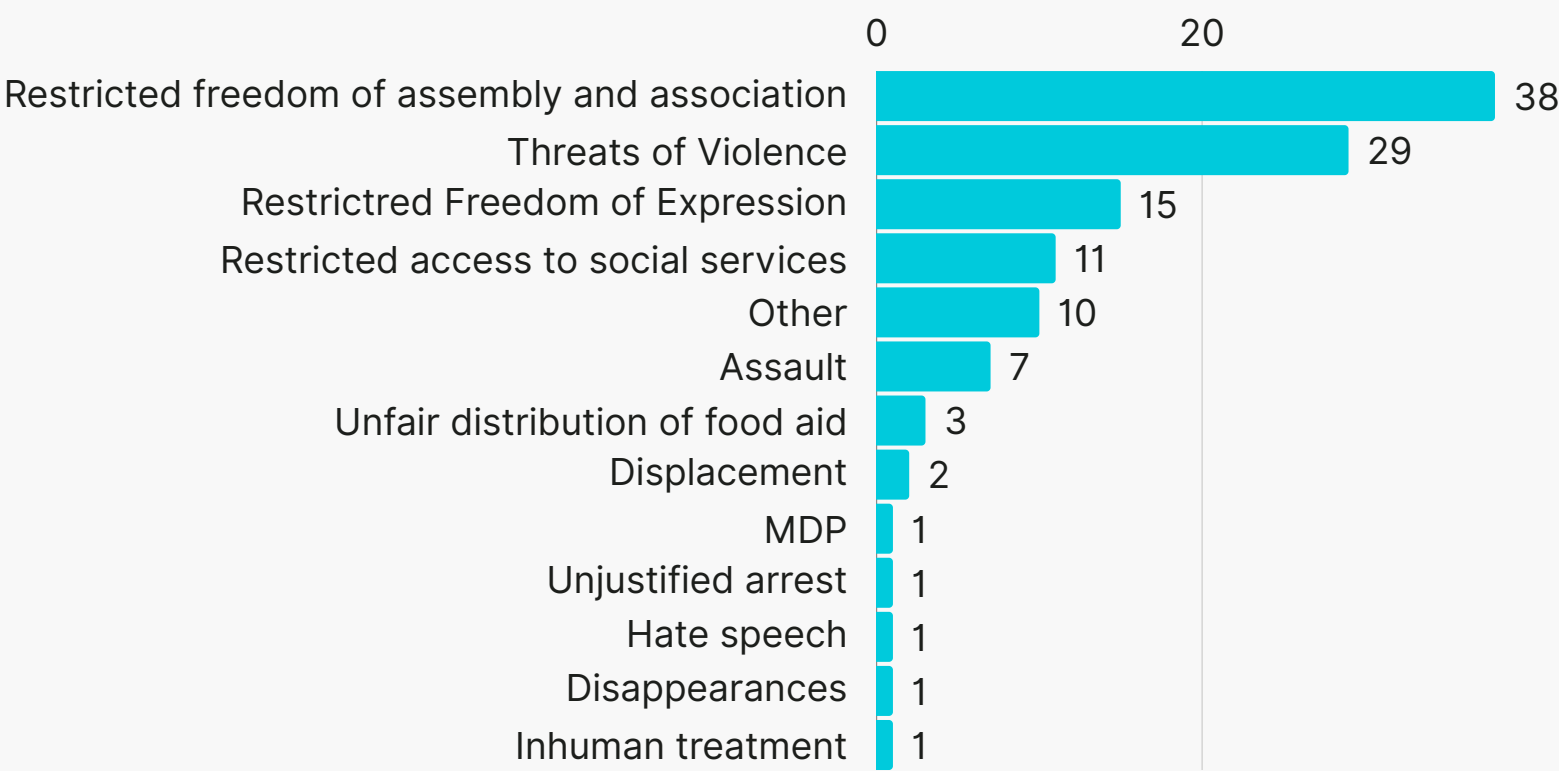


Truck collecting grain collected from villagers

KEY VIOLATIONS

Across rural communities, a consistent trend continues where there is weaponisation of food aid and agricultural inputs to enforce political loyalty. The methods of control, harassment, threats of eviction, and exclusion from essential state programs, leave residents trapped in a climate of fear. Beyond the immediate violations of civil and political rights, these practices erode dignity and strip citizens of their ability to participate freely in community and national life. In one instance in Masvingo North’s Ward 32, ZANU PF officials Nyasha Chigutsa and Philmon Taderera ordered repayment for agricultural inputs received under a state program. Residents were warned that failure to comply would lead to exclusion from future food aid and government support. While the programme asked beneficiaries of government-sponsored schemes to contribute to grain reserves being collected by the Grain Marketing Board as per their announcement of June 2025, its implementation has been forceful and coercive, compelling even households with poor harvests and non-beneficiaries to participate. This approach is especially concerning as it undermines the residents’ rights to freely express themselves, make independent choices, and enjoy their fundamental freedoms. The incidents of harassment and intimidation, often based on political power, reveal not isolated abuses but a systemic pattern of politicised intimidation that undermines fundamental freedoms. Left unchecked, these actions will continue to entrench fear and dependency, perpetuating cycles of exclusion and poverty.

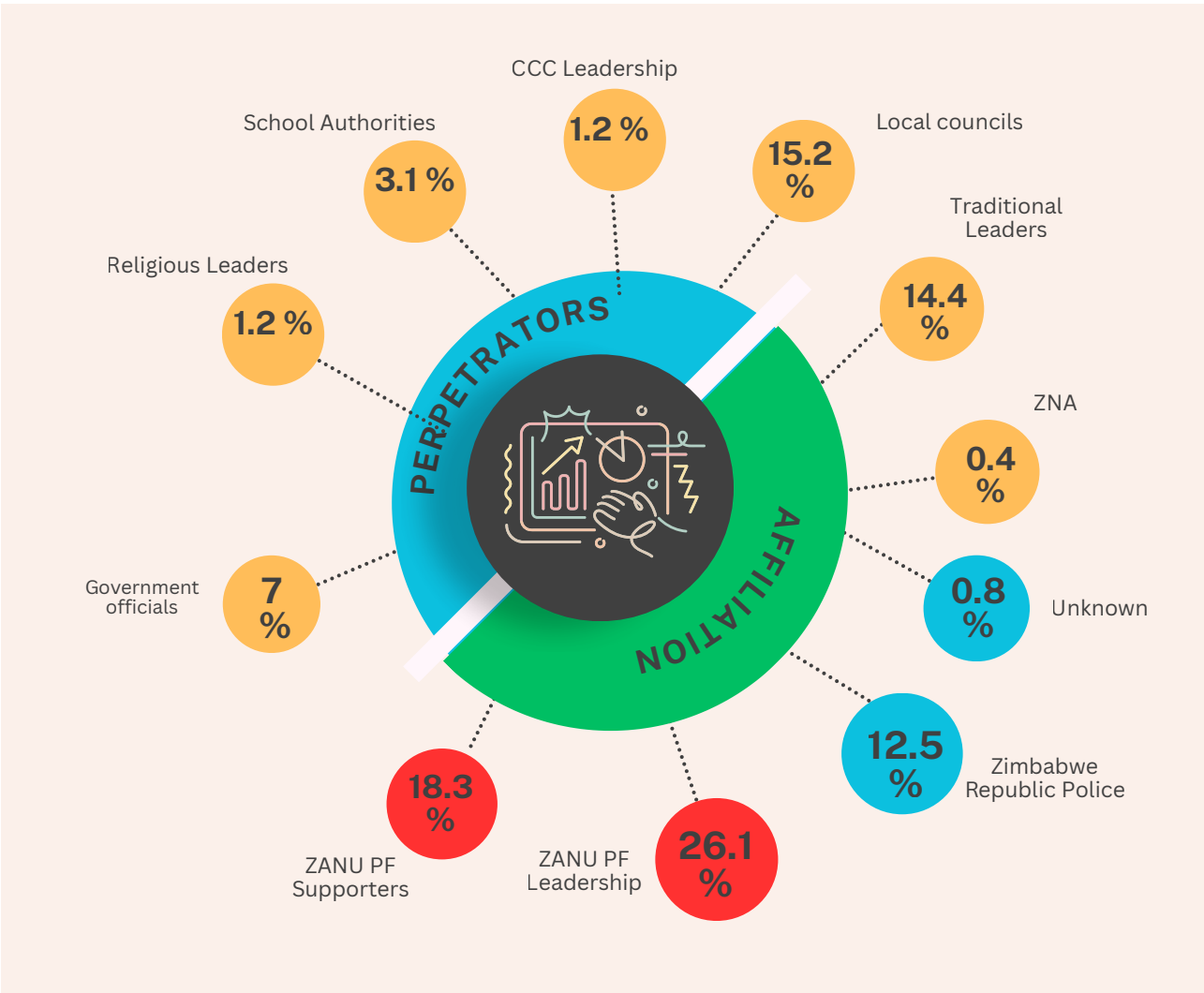
August Human Rights Vioaltions



RIGHTS TO PERSONAL SECURITY BREACHED

In August 2025, seven violations against the right to personal security were documented, reflecting a worrying pattern of politically motivated intimidation and violence. Individuals were assaulted for refusing to disclose their political affiliations, highlighting a direct infringement on the right to personal security, dignity, and freedom of thought and expression.

In Ward 11 of Chiwundura Constituency, Midlands Province, a female villager conducting their everyday activities outside their home was confronted by a group of four individuals she believed were ZANU PF members demanding information about her political allegiance. When she refused to comply, three of the perpetrators physically assaulted her. A police report was made, but none of the assailants were arrested. Similarly, at Gambiza Shopping centre in the same constituency, a community member was confronted by a group seeking the names of those supporting an opposition party. Upon refusing to provide such information, the individual was attacked and only managed to escape and report the incident to the police. The perpetrators remain unidentified, and no arrests have been made, perpetuating a climate of fear and impunity. These violations have a profound impact not only on the immediate victims, who suffer physical harm and psychological trauma, but also on the wider community. They restrict freedom of expression and that of association, instilling fear among citizens and discouraging them from participating freely in civic and political life. The repeated targeting of individuals based on perceived political affiliation underscores the need for stronger protection for personal security and the enforcement of accountability mechanisms to prevent such abuses.



The Zimbabwe Peace Project commends the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC)'s statement on the occasion of the International Day for Victims of Enforced Disappearances (30 August 2025). The commission, among other stakeholders, reaffirmed that enforced disappearances constitute a grave violation of fundamental rights including the right to life, personal liberty, human dignity, personal security, freedom from torture, and the right to a fair trial as enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe and international instruments. The Commission highlighted the ongoing concern over unresolved cases such as that of journalist Itai Dzamara, urged the Government to strengthen investigations, and called for the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances and the United Nations Convention Against Torture (UNCAT), both of which Zimbabwe has not yet acceded to. The statement underscored the duty of the State and all institutions to work together to end enforced disappearances and prevent future violations.

While the ZHRC statement rightly outlines the legal framework and State obligations, it lacks specific and updated data on current trends and victims of enforced disappearances. The Zimbabwe Peace Project documented 16 enforced disappearances between 2024 and 2025 affecting 19 people (11 men and 8 women), pointing to a continuing and serious pattern of abuse that goes beyond individual cases. This evidence underscores the scale and gendered impact of the violations, which could have been reflected in the Commission's statement so as to align and not seem detached from lived realities on the ground. The statement could have been strengthened and made to be victim-centred by including recent statistics, testimonies, and a clear demand for accountability and justice for affected individuals and their families, alongside the legal calls for treaty ratification.

10 STEPS BACKWARDS

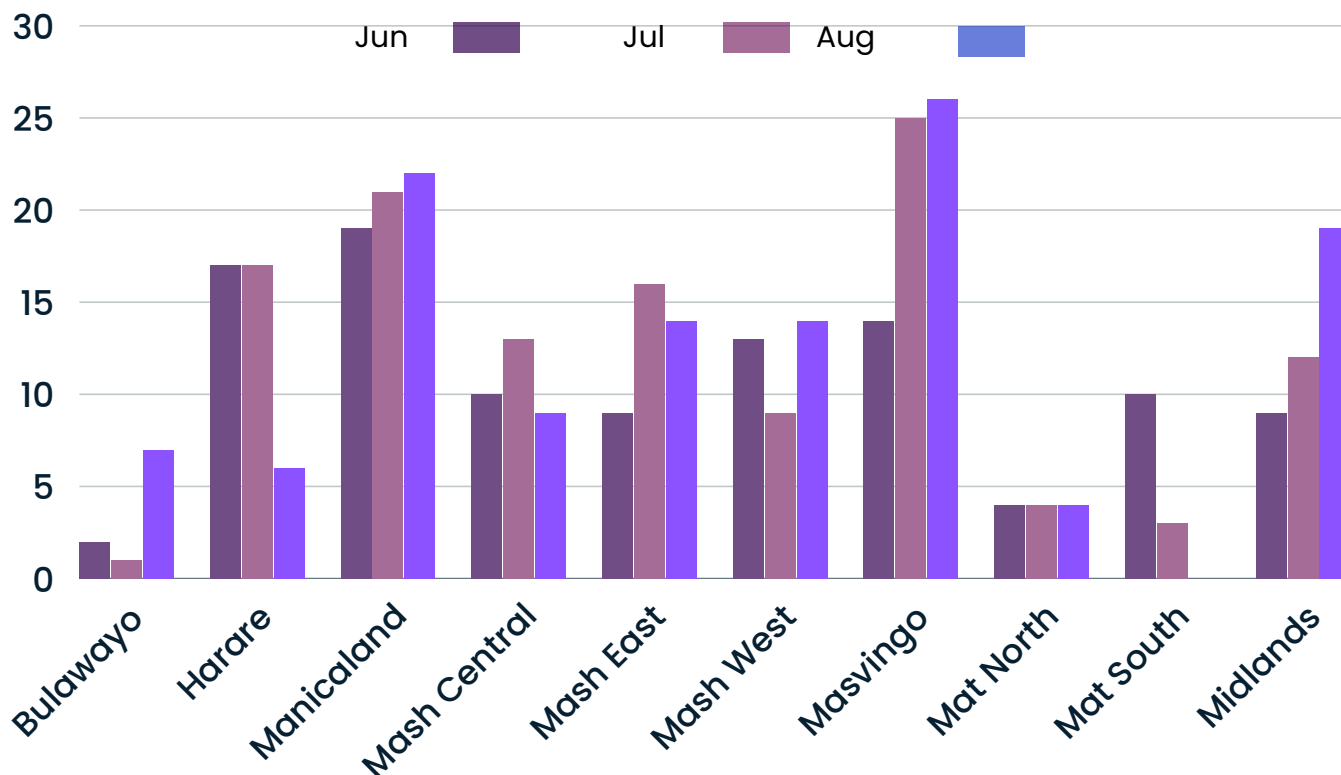
Systematic breach of political rights?

In a deeply troubling incident documented in Murewa North's Ward 30 at Zihute Hall, Honourable Daniel Garwe, a Member of Parliament for Murewa North and a government minister, addressed a ZANU PF meeting and issued chilling threats, declaring that anyone supporting Blessed Geza would be "mashed by hand." He warned that anyone supporting or tolerating the ideas of former ZANU PF member Blessed Geza, known for his criticism of Agenda 2030, which seeks to extend President Mnangagwa's stay in power beyond 2028, would be crushed.



Such inflammatory remarks constitute not only hate speech but also a direct assault on constitutionally protected rights. Section 61 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe guarantees freedom of expression, including the right to seek, receive and impart ideas without fear. Section 58 affirms the right to freedom of assembly and association, while Section 67 explicitly guarantees every citizen the right to form, join and support a political party of their choice, and to campaign freely for it. By threatening violence against those with differing political views, Garwe's statements represent a clear regression of these fundamental freedoms and a systematic breach of political rights. When senior public officials resort to incitement, they undermine the dignity, security, and democratic participation of citizens, fostering fear, silencing dissent, and criminalising political diversity. Such conduct stands in direct violation of Zimbabwe's constitutional obligations and its commitments under international human rights law, demanding urgent accountability.

PROVINCIAL OUTLOOK



Mashonaland East

In Mashonaland East, ZPP documented 14 human rights violations affecting 155 people (81 women and 74 men) in August 2025. The most disturbing case occurred in Murewa North's Ward 30 at Zihute Hall, where the Member of Parliament for Murewa North and a government minister Honourable Daniel Garwe addressed a ZANU PF meeting and issued chilling threats, declaring that opposition supporters would be "mashed by hand." Such statements by a senior public official represent a direct incitement to violence and a serious violation of the rights to personal security, dignity, and political participation. Beyond this, communities in Goromonzi South, Mutoko South, and Marondera West experienced systematic harassment, coercion, and intimidation. Residents were forced to make financial contributions for political events, surrender grain under the presidential inputs scheme, and comply with directives under threat of eviction, exclusion from government aid, or future denial of farming support. These practices reveal an entrenched pattern of abuse where livelihoods are weaponised to enforce political loyalty and silence dissent.

Manicaland

In Manicaland Province, ZPP recorded 22 human rights violations affecting 428 people (247 women and 181 men, including 65 PWDs). In some of the grave abuses, victims were subjected to assaults and widespread forced grain contributions. In Buhera South, Nyanga South, and Chimanimani West, villagers, including people with disabilities, were compelled to surrender at least 10kg of grain per household under threats of exclusion from future agricultural inputs, while in some wards, residents were coerced to provide as much as 50kg of maize, effectively stripping already struggling households of their harvests. These directives, enforced by village heads and party officials, left entire communities in fear, especially those in areas where villagers experienced little yield. Alongside these violations, vendors in Mutare faced harassment and confiscation of goods by municipal police personnel, and in some areas such as Mutasa central constituency and Chimanimani, villagers were pressured to make monetary contributions for political events. Collectively, these practices expose systemic coercion, intimidation, and the weaponisation of livelihoods for political control.

Harare



In Harare, six human rights violations were documented during August 2025 impacting 883 people (371 women and 512 men). Among the most serious ones was an attack on the home of opposition leader Job Sikhala in St Mary's Constituency, Ward 4, where an explosive device was thrown at his home while he was away for a launch of his biography *Footprints in the Chains: The Story of Job Sikhala*. While no injuries were reported, the property sustained extensive damage, marking a grave threat to his and his family's right to personal security and protection from

politically motivated violence. Beyond this, other residents in Harare suffered violations including police brutality against informal traders, harassment, and threats of eviction by local authorities. Families in Mbare Flats, for example, face eviction orders despite living in dilapidated conditions, deepening their vulnerability. Collectively, these incidents reflect a concerning trend of intimidation, abuse of authority, and disregard for the fundamental rights of residents, further eroding trust in institutions meant to protect them.

Midlands

In Midlands Province, 19 human rights violations were recorded, impacting 538 people (269 women and 269 men). The abuses included violent assaults in Chiwundura, where a woman was attacked outside her home by ruling party supporters after refusing to disclose her political allegiance, while in another incident, a man was beaten by a group of youths demanding names of opposition sympathisers. These assaults reflect direct violations of the right to personal security and freedom of expression. Equally concerning were large-scale grain extractions: under directives from local officials, entire communities were compelled to contribute up to 15kg per household, with some wards delivering as much as 13 tonnes of grain to the Grain Marketing Board. Residents complied out of fear of exclusion from future agricultural inputs, despite widespread food shortages. Alongside these, villagers faced monetary demands, intimidation, and schoolchildren were arbitrarily denied access to education, illustrating systemic coercion that deepens community vulnerability.

Bulawayo

In Bulawayo constituency, seven human rights violations were documented, highlighting a concerning trend of abuse. A resident of Cowdray Park died after receiving a wrong injection at Mpilo Hospital, despite doctor's orders, and police inaction. Other cases include political intimidation, discrimination, and obstruction of development meetings, leaving residents marginalized. In Bulawayo Central, Ward 1, a public meeting planned for 31 August 2025 by a coalition of political parties and civil society groups was formally rejected by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP). The police cited non-compliance with the Maintenance of Peace and Order Act (MOPA). These incidents demonstrate a broader pattern of human rights violations, emphasizing the need for accountability and transparency to protect citizens' dignity and promote inclusive development.

Matabeleland South

In Matabeleland South, human rights concerns are widespread. In Matobo Ward 16, over 140 minors did not have access to birth certificates, limiting their rights to identity, education, and social services. In Insiza, a mining company is causing significant environmental damage, threatening local livelihoods, health, and access to natural resources. These cases reflect patterns of systemic neglect and abuse, where vulnerable communities face both administrative and environmental injustices, underscoring urgent needs for accountability and protective measures.

PROVINCIAL OUTLOOK

Masvingo

In Masvingo Province, 16 human rights violations were documented impacting 252 people (146 women and 106 men). In Ward 2 of Masvingo West Constituency, residents face a decade-long environmental injustice: as raw sewage flows through streets and homes, exposing especially children to disease, council inaction and corrupt practices persist despite repeated complaints to Ward Councilor Benson Hwata. In Masvingo Urban Ward 7, ZANU PF supporters vandalized 25 campaign posters of an independent candidate, with no police or ZEC response by 25 August. The ward is set to vote in a bi-election on September 13 following the death of former councillor Tafara Masimba. Other violations include forced grain contributions under government programs in Zaka South and Masvingo North, pressuring vulnerable farmers to “repay” agricultural inputs, and unclear use of community collections, as seen during Heroes Day where villagers were forced to contribute money towards Heroes holiday but did not get feedback on how the resources were or would be used. In Chiredzi, vendors face harassment and confiscation of goods despite paying council fees. Collectively, these cases reveal systemic abuse, political intimidation, neglect of public services, and exploitation of residents’ basic rights across Masvingo Province.

Matabeleland North

In Matabeleland North, four human rights violations were documented. In Tsholotsho ward 11, a community member was forced to pay three hundred South African Rand for digging a borehole at their homestead. The community member had all the required paperwork, but the village head and his committee tried to force the community member to pay the R300. The case was taken to the Head man who acquitted the community member and, in turn, fined the village head and his committee. The ongoing Gukurahundi hearings, facilitated through traditional leaders, have raised concerns about political coercion in awareness campaigns, limiting free and informed participation. The process is slow, and many young attendees can only provide second-hand accounts, as firsthand witnesses are aging and passing away. This situation underscores the urgent need to protect civic space, ensure accountability for past atrocities, and preserve the historical memory of affected communities. These challenges reflect broader human rights issues in the province, including the right to justice, truth, and meaningful participation in processes that address past violations.

Manicaland Central

In Mashonaland Central, nine human rights violations were documented affecting 313 residents (170 women and 143 men). The most serious incident involved coercion and forced contributions of grain from beneficiaries of government sponsored agricultural programs. Councillors, village heads, and party officials instructed households to contribute maize, ranging from 2 gallons to 20kg per family, with threats that non-compliance would result in exclusion from Pfumvudza inputs and other government sponsored aid. In Guruve South and Mt Darwin West, residents faced pressure to hand over maize despite poor harvests, leaving vulnerable households at risk of hunger. Similarly, in Mangondo village in Mt Darwin South, villagers were forced to pay US\$1 per household for Heroes Day celebrations, with refusal branded unpatriotic, violating constitutional freedoms of association. These practices reflected the trending political coercion, and exploitation of citizens’ basic rights, including food security, freedom from intimidation, and equitable access to government support programs, highlighting urgent concerns over governance and accountability in the province.



**Report
Human Rights Violations**

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Mashonaland West

In Mashonaland West, 14 human rights violations were documented affecting 502 residents (270 women and 232 men, including 14 PWDs) including coercion tied to the presidential Pfumvudza inputs program. In Zvimba North, Ward 31, agritex officers, councilors, chiefs, and village heads demanded 10kg of maize per household, threatening exclusion from future inputs for non-compliance. Similar forced contributions were reported across Mashonaland West, including Magunje, Hurungwe, Chegutu East, and Makonde, despite poor harvests, drought, and delayed government support. In some cases, villagers not benefiting from inputs were still compelled to contribute. Additionally, schools in Zvimba North were instructed to pay US\$0.25 per child for the First Lady's Quiz and Gastronomy Show, with principals pressured to borrow funds if school accounts were empty. These practices reveal a disturbing pattern of systemic abuse, political coercion, and egregious violations of economic and social rights. Citizens' fundamental rights to food, education, and protection from forced contributions are being trampled, fostering a climate of fear, intimidation, and glaring governance failures in the province.

Conclusion

The documented violations in the month of August reveal that human rights violations in Zimbabwe are not isolated events but are entrenched within systemic patterns of abuse that continue to weaken the social fabric and undermine meaningful democratic participation and enjoyment of basic fundamental freedoms. These abuses manifest in multiple ways, including widespread fear, the silencing of dissenting voices, and the deliberate targeting of vulnerable groups such as women, children, and the rural poor, all of which exacerbate cycles of marginalisation and insecurity. Addressing these deep-seated challenges requires more than rhetoric; it demands urgent and decisive action to enforce fundamental freedoms and rights enshrined as Zimbabwe's constitutional obligations and its binding commitments under international human rights law. Central to this is the need to ensure genuine accountability for perpetrators of violations, to guarantee stronger and enforceable protections for fundamental freedoms such as expression, association, and assembly, and to make deliberate investments in inclusive, community-driven healing and reconciliation processes that acknowledge past harms while building pathways toward justice and repair. Only through such comprehensive and courageous measures, that all human rights advocates must promote, can Zimbabwe begin to move toward a society in which the dignity, security, and fundamental rights of all citizens are respected, protected, and upheld without discrimination or fear.



Re-Imagining
Sustainable **Peace** in
Zimbabwe



Zimbabwe Peace Project

