



Monthly Monitoring Report

SEPTEMBER 2025

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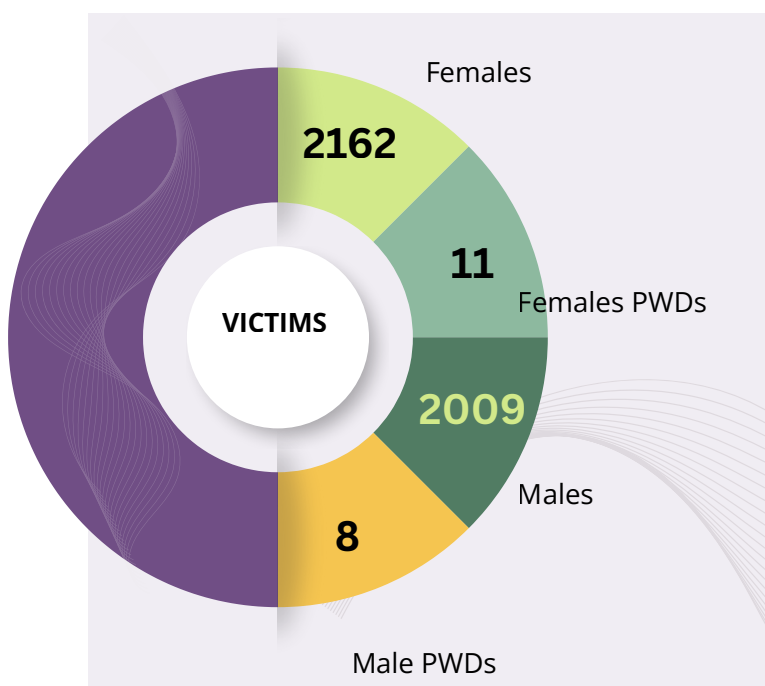
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2025, the Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) documented a total of 115 human rights violations across the country, affecting 4,190 victims. Of these, 2,173 were women and 2,017 were men, of which 19 were persons with disabilities.

The documented violations encompassed a range of rights abuses, including harassment and intimidation, assault, discrimination and unfair practices in the distribution of government aid, as well as restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, and association. Additional violations included denial of access to social services, forced displacements, unjustified arrests, restrictions on movement, and inhuman or degrading treatment.

A variety of actors were implicated as perpetrators. ZANU PF leaders at various levels of authority accounted for 21.3%, while ZANU PF supporters were responsible for 17.9%. Other perpetrators included traditional leaders (10.3%), school authorities (9.9%), local authorities (8.0%), and members of the Zimbabwe Republic Police (7.6%). Additional actors comprised state security agents (4.6%), government officials (4.2%), artisanal miners (2.7%), members of the Zimbabwe National Army (3.8%), and CCC leaders (0.8%). Notably, 9.1% of the perpetrators were not affiliated with any identifiable group or institution.

At the provincial level, Manicaland recorded the highest number of violations (20). Masvingo documented 19 violations, a decrease from 26 in the previous month. Harare recorded 18 violations, followed by Midlands (15), Mashonaland East (12), Mashonaland West (11), and Mashonaland Central (10). Bulawayo recorded 5 violations, while Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South registered 3 and 2 violations respectively. In the section “Towards Sustainable Peace in Zimbabwe,” the report highlights the work of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission in investigating service delivery-related and human rights violations committed by local authorities. ZPP recommends stronger accountability measures to ensure that citizens’ rights and freedoms are upheld.



However, as outlined in the section “Ten Steps Backwards,” while the number of violations in September decreased slightly from 121 in August to 115, this decline does not reflect a significant or sustainable improvement in the human rights situation. The persistence and spread of violations underscore the need for sustained oversight, institutional accountability, and systemic reforms.

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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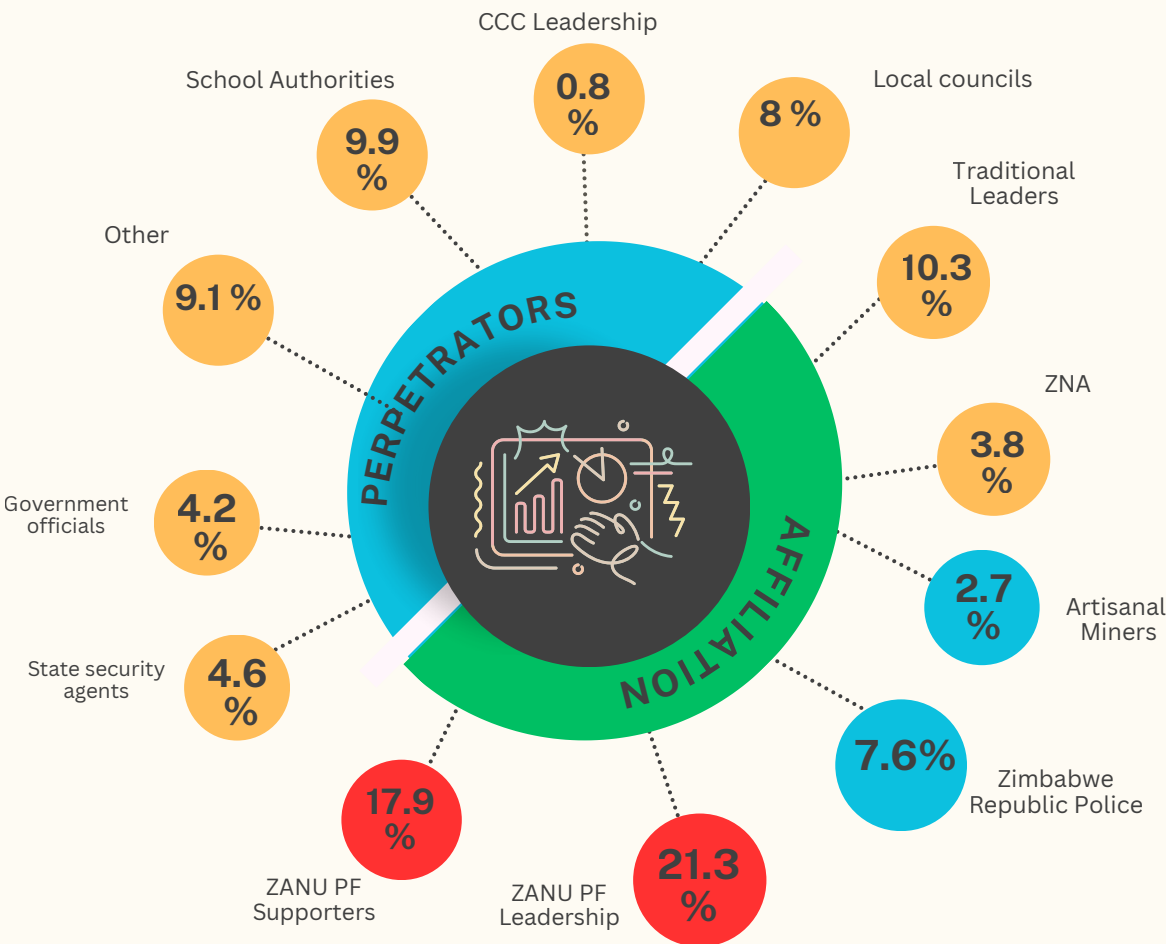
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VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO PERSONAL SECURITY

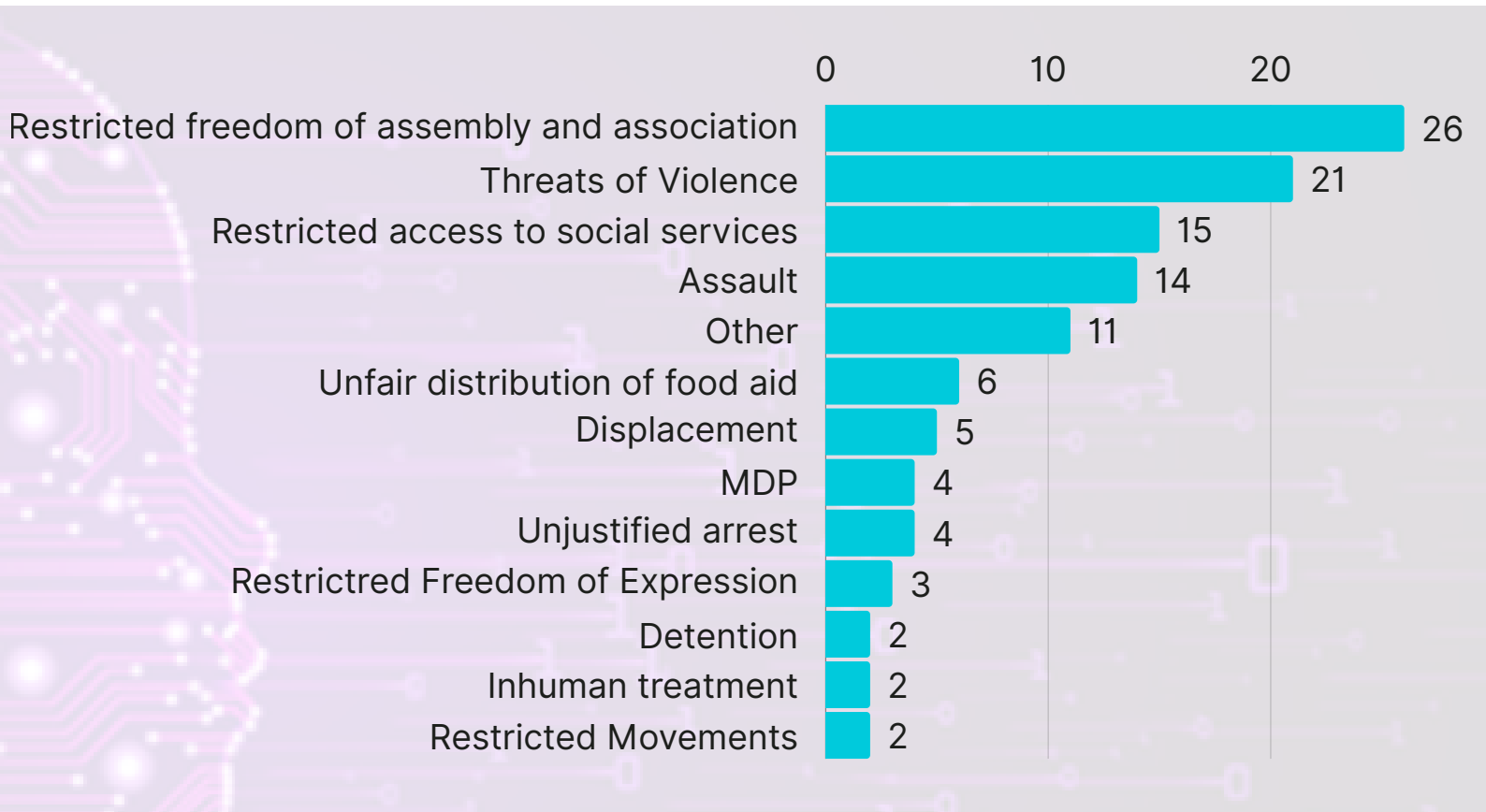
During the reporting period, 14 grave violations of the right to personal security involving state actors, unaffiliated citizens, and ruling party affiliates were documented, reflecting a troubling pattern of political violence and intimidation. Additionally, 21 violations in the form of threats of violence were also documented across provinces.

In Binga South, the Zimbabwe National Army deployed approximately 25 soldiers without public notice, raising serious concerns over the militarisation of civilian spaces. Although their presence was linked to anti-smuggling operations, it coincided with intensified opposition activities, suggesting a political motive. Soldiers assaulted two fishermen, imposed illegal fines, controlled local fish trading, and carried out arbitrary punishments, actions far beyond their constitutional mandate and in violation of rights to personal security, due process, and freedom of association. Similarly, at the MSU graduation ceremony in Kwekwe on 11 September 2025, soldiers assaulted twelve attendees who attempted to leave before the President concluded proceedings.

In Harare, state security operatives inflicted violence on civilians during law enforcement operations, including the assault of a woman and the torture of a man who was later found innocent of any crime, reflecting the unchecked and unlawful use of force by state actors. Ruling party supporters were also implicated in politically motivated assaults. In Kariba, four men and one woman were attacked after a debate on national leadership; in Mashonaland West (Chinhoyi Ward 10), two opposition supporters were beaten for wearing opposition regalia; and in Mashonaland East (Ward 12), two women were assaulted and forcibly removed from a funeral for allegedly belonging to the opposition. In Chitungwiza, a victim was burned and assaulted by suspected ruling party supporters for wearing clothing associated with the opposition showing the nature of political intolerance in communities. These incidents collectively underscore a pattern in which citizens, who may be state agents, ruling party affiliates or taking advantage of weak human rights accountability act with impunity to intimidate civilians, suppress dissent, and violate fundamental rights.



September Human Rights Vioaltions



RESTRICTED FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

During the reporting period, 26 violations of the right to freedom of assembly and association were documented across the country, affecting 913 people (511 women, 402 men including 1 PWD) and reflecting increasing political control over civic spaces and essential resources. In Kariba, 36 people were barred by ruling party members from holding a meeting, while in Chitungwiza Ward 8, seven opposition members were violently dispersed by suspected state agents during a planning meeting. In Mberengwa Ward 25, traditional leaders openly endorsed the ruling party during a development meeting, further blurring the line between state and party structures. Similarly, in Chivi Ward 16, ZANU PF leaders excluded opposition activists from a Care International community garden initiative, politicising access to aid. In several communities, particularly rural areas, forced grain contributions and the politicisation of government aid programs have become powerful tools of coercion. Households are compelled to contribute grain or align with ruling party structures to access food aid and farming inputs, effectively forcing political association as a condition for survival. This undermines Section 58 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, which guarantees every person the right to freedom of assembly and association, including the right not to belong to any political organisation.. These incidents collectively reveal how party affiliates are weaponising food aid, development programs, and community spaces to compel political allegiance, severely undermining political pluralism and citizens’ constitutional freedoms.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN ZIMBABWE

The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) commends the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) for its work in investigating and issuing strong recommendations on service delivery-related human rights violations by local authorities, particularly the City of Harare. Guided by its constitutional mandate to promote, protect, and enforce human rights and administrative justice, the Commission has raised serious concerns over preventable loss of life and systemic neglect. The deaths of two council workers on 31 August 2025 at the Glen View sewage plant, after inhaling toxic gases due to a faulty valve, highlight gross negligence and failure to provide protective equipment, violating their rights to life, dignity, and safe working conditions. Workers have also reported unpaid salaries, unhygienic environments, and hazardous exposure. Additionally, the preventable death of Ms. Clara Bear, who fell into an uncovered trench, reflects the City's disregard for public safety and its duty of care.

ZPP urges the City to urgently address these violations and several other service delivery human rights violations particularly relating to inhuman treatment and calls on ZHRC to continue thoroughly investigating other serious human rights concerns rooted in corruption and neglect, and culminating in health crises, inequality, and discrimination, ensuring accountability and adherence to constitutional obligations and administrative justice standards.

10 STEPS BACKWARDS



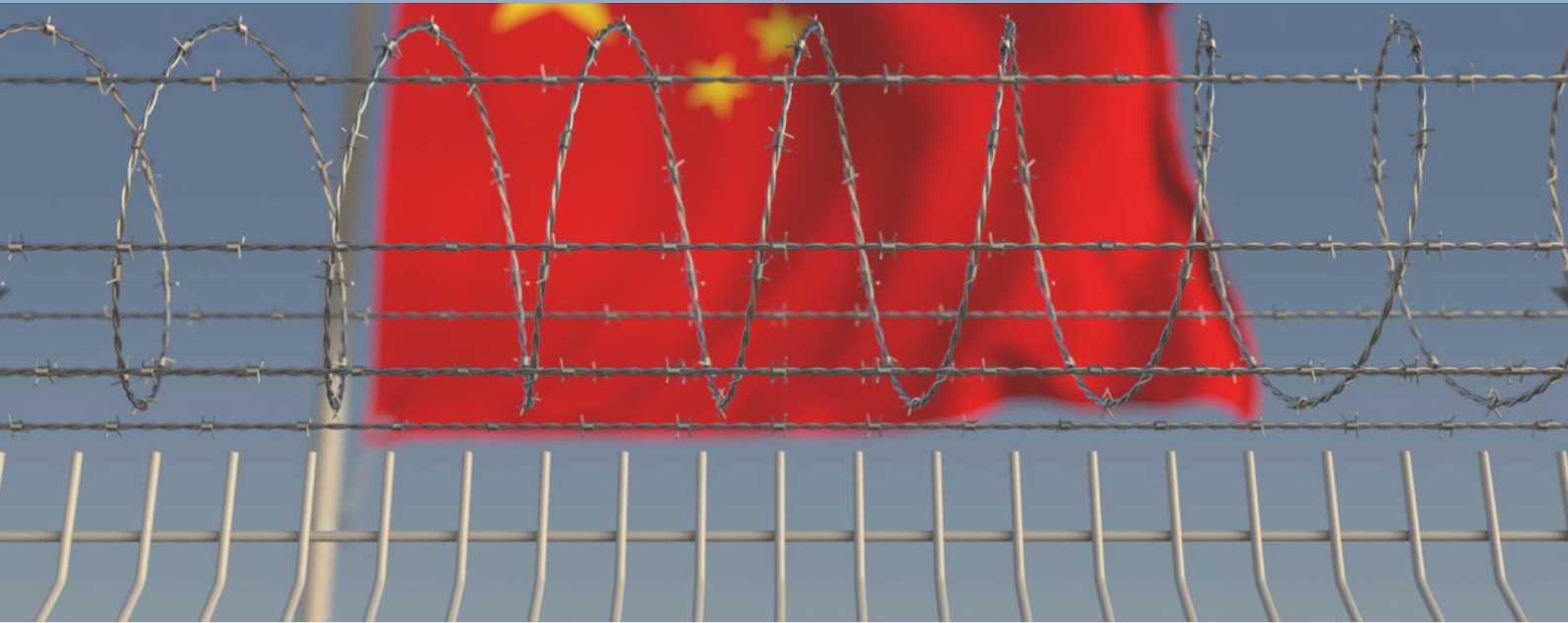
The Dark Side of Unseen Human Rights Violations

When one looks across Africa, where armed conflicts dominate headlines in several countries, Zimbabwe may appear, on the surface, to be a peaceful nation. Politicians often proclaim stability, pointing to the absence of open warfare as evidence of harmony. However, beneath this calm exterior lies a troubling reality of systematic and often unseen human rights violations that continue to undermine fundamental freedoms.

From the Zimbabwe Peace Project's observations, many citizens are prevented from freely expressing themselves due to a deliberate and sustained commitment by the state or members of its institutions, to silence dissent. Journalists who publish critical voices have faced repeated arrests and persecution. At the community level, victims are threatened against exercising their political rights, discouraged from supporting opposition voices, or even from openly discussing the prevailing political climate. This culture of fear forces people to retreat from public discourse, allowing local and national leaders to trample upon citizens' rights with impunity.

Widespread corruption further deepens these violations. As public resources are mismanaged, communities are deprived of essential services such as healthcare, roads, schools, and clean water. In mining communities, forced evictions and exposure to hazardous conditions have become routine, with politically connected investors shielded from accountability. Meanwhile, serious abuses, including torture and abductions, often go uninvestigated, perpetuating a cycle of impunity.

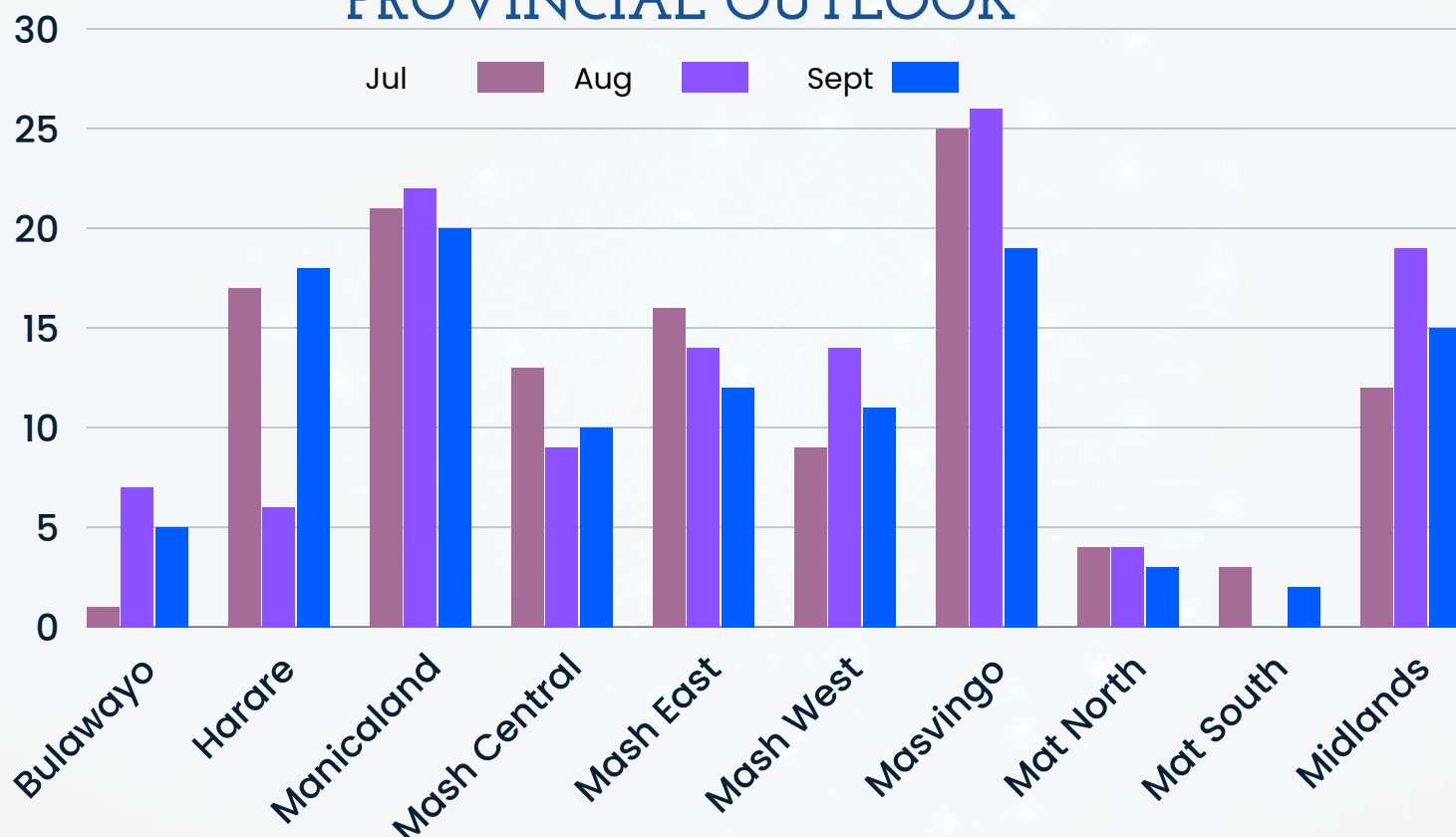
Local authorities, despite collecting rates and holding a public mandate, frequently neglect their duties to provide basic services, compounding citizens' suffering. These hidden and systemic violations challenge the simplistic narrative of peace. They compel us to rethink Zimbabwe's human rights situation collectively, confront impunity, and reimagine sustainable peace rooted in justice, accountability, and respect for human dignity.



Human rights abuses linked to Chinese investors and associates.

ZPP continues to monitor, together with other actors, the broader pattern of abuses by Chinese-owned companies and individuals in Zimbabwe, marking systematic violations of human dignity, workers' rights, and community protections. These range from labour exploitation, such as unlawful wage deductions, intimidation, and threats against workers at companies like Sunny Yi Feng in Norton, to gross land and livelihood rights violations, including forced evictions without compensation in communities such as Mutandahwe in Chipinge South. In Mashonaland West, in Norton, for example at Sunny Yi Feng, security personnel are being punished with salary cuts if they fail to make at least five arrests per month, even when no theft or misconduct occurs. This exploitative policy violates both labour law and the right to fair compensation. Victims frequently report coercion, fear of retaliation, degrading treatment, and suppression of freedom of expression and association, while women often face targeted humiliation and gender-based abuse. These violations reveal widespread disregard for constitutional rights, labour laws, environmental safety standards, and community welfare, demonstrating a disturbing culture of impunity among Chinese investors operating with the protection or complicity of local authorities.

PROVINCIAL OUTLOOK



Masvingo

In Masvingo Province, ZPP documented 19 human rights violations, with the most serious involving political discrimination, coercion, and the violation of economic and educational rights. 795 people (453 women, 342 men including 4 PWDs) were affected by these breaches of human rights. In Masvingo Urban Ward 7, ZANU PF engaged in vote-buying with rice and wheat ahead of the Municipality Ward 7 election held on the 13th of September, while some landlords belonging to the ruling party were instructed to threaten tenants with eviction if the party losses, undermining citizens' political freedom. In schools, children were initially sent home over fees, violating their right to education, though corrective interventions restored access to some. In Chivi Central, community gardens and food-for-work programs disproportionately benefited ZANU PF supporters, discriminating against opposition activists. Similarly, in Mwenezi East, residents were coerced into contributing 9 kg of harvests per household under the guise of GMB silos, with surplus reportedly diverted by local leaders, reflecting systemic abuse of authority and economic exploitation. These violations collectively highlight political coercion, discrimination, and the abuse of basic economic, social, and civil rights across the province.

Manicaland

In Manicaland, 20 human rights violations were documented, affecting 506 community members (308 women, 198 men including 4 PWDs). The most serious cases involved forced labour, extortion, discrimination, and intimidation. In Chimanimani East, villagers were ordered by Licon Musiya, a ZANU PF ward chair, to clear a 15 km road, with non-compliance met with threats, causing psychological trauma for those who resisted. Across Chimanimani and Chipinge, community members were coerced into contributing 10 kg of maize to the GMB or "for the President," with threats of blacklisting from agricultural inputs for those who refused. In Mutasa Central, a headmaster isolated pupils with fee arrears denying them access to classrooms or other educational facilities, mostly BEAM beneficiaries, amounting to discrimination in education. In Mutasa North, eight wards were affected by forced maize contributions to the GMB enforced through threats of exclusion from Pfumvudza inputs, while political intimidation at a village meeting excluded non-ZANU PF members from aid.

Midlands

In the Midlands, ZPP documented 15 human rights violations affecting 816 victims (488 women, 328 men including 1 PWD), with the most serious involving discrimination, intimidation, and the violation of the right to education. In Mberengwa East, the headmistress of Gomututu Primary School expelled pupils with fee arrears, denying them access to education, while local chiefs ordered households to pay 10 kg of grain or risk exclusion from government aid, amounting to coercion and extortion. In Chiwundura, suspected surveillance of opposition supporters by unidentified individuals created fear and intimidation within communities. In Gokwe Chireya, over 800 students, including Grade 7 pupils preparing for exams, were sent home over fees, violating their right to education. These incidents reflect systemic neglect, abuse of authority, and politically motivated intimidation, undermining citizens' rights to education, equality, and freedom from coercion.

Harare

In Harare, 18 human rights violations were recorded, with human rights abuses including restrictions on freedom of assembly and political intimidation. In Chitungwiza Ward 8, seven opposition members were violently dispersed during a planning meeting, while in Epworth a CCC supporter was attacked with a knife by a ZANU PF supporter following a dispute, and another victim's shirt was burned for political affiliation. Schools were commandeered to provide transport for the ZimSports4ED Munhumutapa Sports Tournament, as well as students were compelled to participate in the games disregarding prior ZHRC recommendations against the abuse of schools infrastructure by political parties in the matter ZHRC/CI/0069/17. Residents in Kuwadzana rely on unsafe water sources, while pregnant women in Epworth clinics face unlawful fees for essential reproductive health services. Additionally, in Epworth, 35 market vendors were displaced from a community vending market in favor of ruling party supporters. These incidents collectively highlight violations of freedom of assembly, political intimidation, physical assault, forced participation, displacement, and denial of basic socio-economic and health rights.

Matabeleland South

In Matabeleland North, ZPP documented two human rights violations involving political intolerance and disruption of community processes. In Gwanda North's Ward 6, former CCC Councillor Kelon Sikula disrupted a community meeting convened by the incumbent (CCC) councillor, Joseph Khumalo, by making inflammatory remarks aimed at undermining him. The confrontation, which took place on 10 September at Mtshazo Ward Centre, only ended when the village head intervened to restore order. Such conduct reflects political intolerance and interference with community governance, undermining citizens' rights to participate freely in local affairs and to be represented without intimidation or disruption.

Mashonaland East

In Mashonaland East, ZPP documented 12 human rights violations involving assault and intimidation by ZANU PF supporters. 142 people (86 women and 56 men) were impacted. In Seke Ward 12, opposition-affiliated individuals were physically assaulted after attending a village funeral, highlighting political violence and restriction of assembly. At Muchinjike School on 6 September 2025, the ZANU PF ward chairman ordered fines for those who had not contributed 10 kg of grain, coercing compliance under threat of punishment. In Mrewa, local leaders threatened and restricted community members, demanding grain contributions with traditional leaders and warning of forced removal for non-compliance. Additionally, six families in Uzumba Maramba-Pfungwe lost fields to Chinese miners, facing property destruction and threats of violence. Collectively, these incidents demonstrate systematic abuse of authority, political intimidation, assault, and violations of the rights to personal security, assembly, property, and protection from coercion.

Bulawayo

In Bulawayo, five human rights violations were documented. The violations, affecting 541 people (331 women and 210 men), ranged from restrictions on freedom of assembly to political coercion. In Entumbane, ZANU PF district officials, including Chairman Mr. Mguni, held mandatory meetings requiring residents to purchase party membership cards to access farming inputs, effectively punishing those who did not comply and undermining freedom of association. In Bulawayo South, residents in Sizinda faced a two-week water shortage despite paying bills, violating their right to water. Pumula and other clinics have deteriorated, forcing patients to pay for essential medical supplies and exposing communities to preventable health risks. In Bulawayo Ward 12, government support was distributed unfairly, with access conditioned on party membership, restricting political freedoms. Collectively, these incidents highlight systematic violations of freedom of assembly, access to basic services, political coercion, and the right to essential healthcare.

Mashonaland West

In Mashonaland West, ZPP documented 11 human rights violations affecting 293 people (143 women, 150 men including 10 PWDs), with the most serious relating to restrictions on freedom of assembly and political intimidation. In Chinhoyi Ward 10, opposition supporters were assaulted for wearing party T-shirts, while in Kariba, 36 people were barred from convening meetings without ruling party approval, undermining freedom of expression, assembly, and association. In Makonde Ward 8, artisanal mining disputes and unregulated activities led to threats of violence and displacement, affecting children and persons with disabilities. In Hurungwe, a CCC supporter's home was set on fire, reflecting political violence and malicious property damage. Residents in Chinhoyi also face limited water access due to corruption and mismanagement, while poor waste collection and inaccessible roads threaten public health and safety. Collectively, these incidents highlight systematic political intimidation, suppression of assembly, threats to personal security, and violations of basic socio-economic rights.

Manicaland Central

In Mashonaland Central, ZPP documented 10 human rights violations affecting 233 people (93 women, 140 men including 1 PWD). In Guruve North, villagers in wards 5, 6, and 7 were forced to surrender between 10 and 16 kg of maize per household despite widespread low harvest, potentially worsening the food security situation for several households thus threatening their right to food and dignity. Village heads and secretaries compel compliance and coordinate the collection, deepening economic coercion against already vulnerable communities. Additionally, in Mt Darwin East, a ZANU PF supporter barred a young man from participating in a football match for wearing a Blue Movement T-shirt, highlighting political discrimination and suppression of freedom of association. These violations reflect systemic abuse, coercion, and the use of force to control communities.



**Report
Human Rights Violations**

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Matabeleland North

In Matabeleland North, ZPP documented three significant human rights violations, the most serious involving assault and abuse of authority by deployed soldiers. In Binga South, Saba-Lubanda Ward 8, soldiers were deployed without prior notice, allegedly for anti-smuggling or stock theft operations, but their presence coincided with heightened political activity, suggesting intimidation of opposition gatherings. During this period, opposition members campaigning for a new political movement faced obstruction, including interference by ZRP. Soldiers beat two male fishermen and forcibly collected fines without due process, violating constitutional rights to safety, fair hearing, and freedom of association, while fishermen and traders were coerced to surrender fish and money, with female traders subjected to sexual exploitation. In Binga North Ward 6, villagers, including the elderly, were forced to pay for access to government maize distributions under threat of exclusion. These incidents reveal systemic abuse of power, political intimidation, economic coercion, physical assault, and violations of constitutional rights to life, property, and fair administrative procedures.

Conclusion

The documented human rights violations across Zimbabwe reveal a deeply concerning pattern of politically motivated abuses including some where state apparatuses are utilised and widespread abuses often going unnoticed. Beyond the visible assaults and public crackdowns, subtle but equally harmful practices, such as the politicisation of food aid, forced grain contributions, and the manipulation of community structures, are eroding fundamental freedoms. These actions undermine the constitutional rights to personal security, freedom of assembly, association, and expression, while fostering fear and dependency within communities. The use of security forces and party structures to control civic spaces and livelihoods reflects a deliberate strategy to silence dissent and entrench power.

Addressing both overt and hidden violations is essential for restoring citizens' dignity, democratic participation, and constitutional order.