



110 HRVs
3677
Victims

Monthly Monitoring Report

JANUARY 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January, the Zimbabwe Peace Project documented 110 human rights violations, reflecting continued constraints on the enjoyment of protected human rights. These violations directly affected 3,677 victims, including 1,721 women and 1,956 men, demonstrating the widespread nature of rights infringements across provinces. Notably, 33 persons with disabilities were among those affected, underscoring the disproportionate vulnerability of groups that are already at heightened risk of exclusion and discrimination.

The violations recorded point to persistent patterns of civic space restriction and abuse of power. Documented cases include threats of violence, assault, inequitable distribution of government support, and limitations on freedoms of assembly, association, and expression, alongside barriers to accessing essential social services. Additional violations such as unjustified arrests, displacement, malicious damage to property, and prolonged detention highlight the ongoing risks faced by citizens in enjoying their rights.

Analysis of perpetrator trends reveals significant involvement by both political and state-linked actors. Members and supporters of the ruling party accounted for 45.6% of those perpetuating violations, indicating the continued politicization of civic and socio-economic spaces. Members of the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) accounted for 13.1%, and other state security agents contributed 3.0%, raising concerns around the role of security institutions in undermining, rather than upholding, human rights protections. Institutions also played a notable role, with government authorities responsible for 5.1%, local authorities 11.4%, and school authorities 8.9% of perpetrators. Community leaders were also implicated, with traditional leaders contributing 10.1% and religious leaders 0.4%. A further 2.5% of violations were committed by perpetrators with no clear institutional or political affiliation.

Geographically, violations were recorded across all provinces, illustrating the nationwide nature of rights concerns. Manicaland recorded the highest number with 31 violations, followed by Masvingo with 19, and Harare with 16. Other provinces reflected sustained rights pressures, with Midlands recording 13 and Mashonaland West 10, Mashonaland East 6, Matabeleland North 5, and Mashonaland Central and Matabeleland South recording 4 each, while Bulawayo recorded 2 violations. This distribution signals that while intensity varies, human rights risks remain present across multiple regions.

Overall, the January data reflects continued structural and institutional challenges in the protection, promotion, and fulfilment of human rights, reinforcing the urgent need for strengthened accountability mechanisms, rights-based governance, and safeguards to protect vulnerable and marginalised populations.

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).

Contents

Executive Summary	2
Key human rights violations.....	4
Ten steps backwards.....	7
Provincial Outlook.....	8

Report Human Rights Violations

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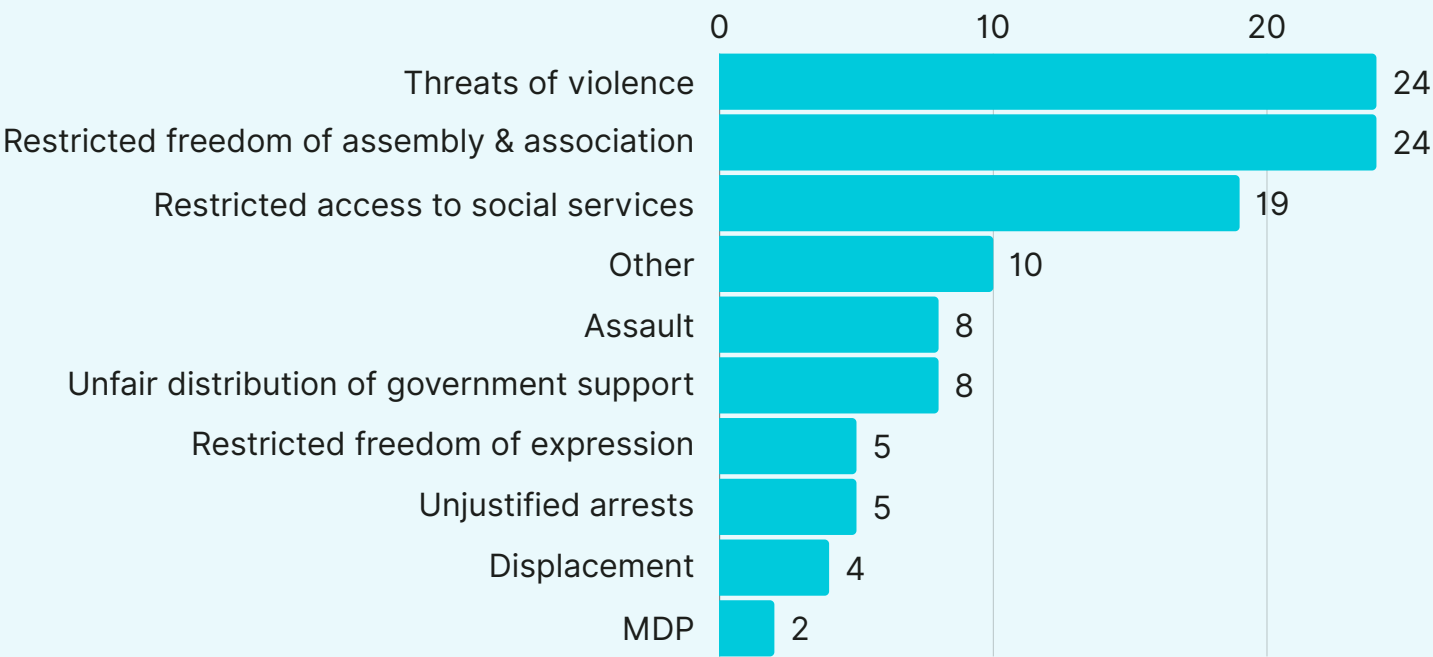
RIGHT TO PERSONAL SECURITY

In January, eight violations related to the right to personal security were documented, largely linked to politically motivated violence sustained by a culture of impunity. These incidents constitute violations of the rights to security of person, freedom of association, freedom of expression, and equal protection before the law. In Ward 14, Zhombe Constituency, a male victim was assaulted by a ZANU PF youth leader at Mkonto Village after demanding transparency and accountability in the distribution of agricultural inputs. Although the matter was reported to the police and the perpetrator was convicted and sentenced to community service, political pressure from party affiliates interfered with enforcement of the sentence resulting in the perpetrator not serving his sentence, thus undermining the rule of law. In Nyanga South, a ZANU PF youth group disrupted a community meeting in Ward 15 and attacked a volunteer working with a non-governmental organisation supporting young girls. The attack appeared aimed at seizing community resources and discrediting the volunteer’s political loyalty. Following the incident, the victim was arrested for public violence after attempting to defend himself and was fined USD 50, while alleged perpetrators faced no immediate consequences. Such selective application of the law increases vulnerability for community-based actors. In Chitungwiza South, a victim was assaulted by members of the ruling party for wearing clothing associated with the opposition party leader Nelson Chamisa signalling ongoing political intolerance and violating rights to freedom of expression, political participation, and personal security.

Additional incidents indicate a pattern where individuals invoke ruling party affiliation to intimidate and commit acts of violence. In Chikanga-Dangamvura, a ruling party youth member, Douglas Kajayi, and associates assaulted a victim during a dispute at a public entertainment area while asserting political dominance. Delays or failure by law enforcement to make timely arrests in such cases further entrenches impunity, reduces trust in state protection mechanisms, and increases the risk of continued victimisation.

Overall, these cases demonstrate how political influence, selective law enforcement, and weak accountability mechanisms enable human rights violations, restrict civic space, and perpetuate fear within affected communities.

February Human Rights Violations



HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION

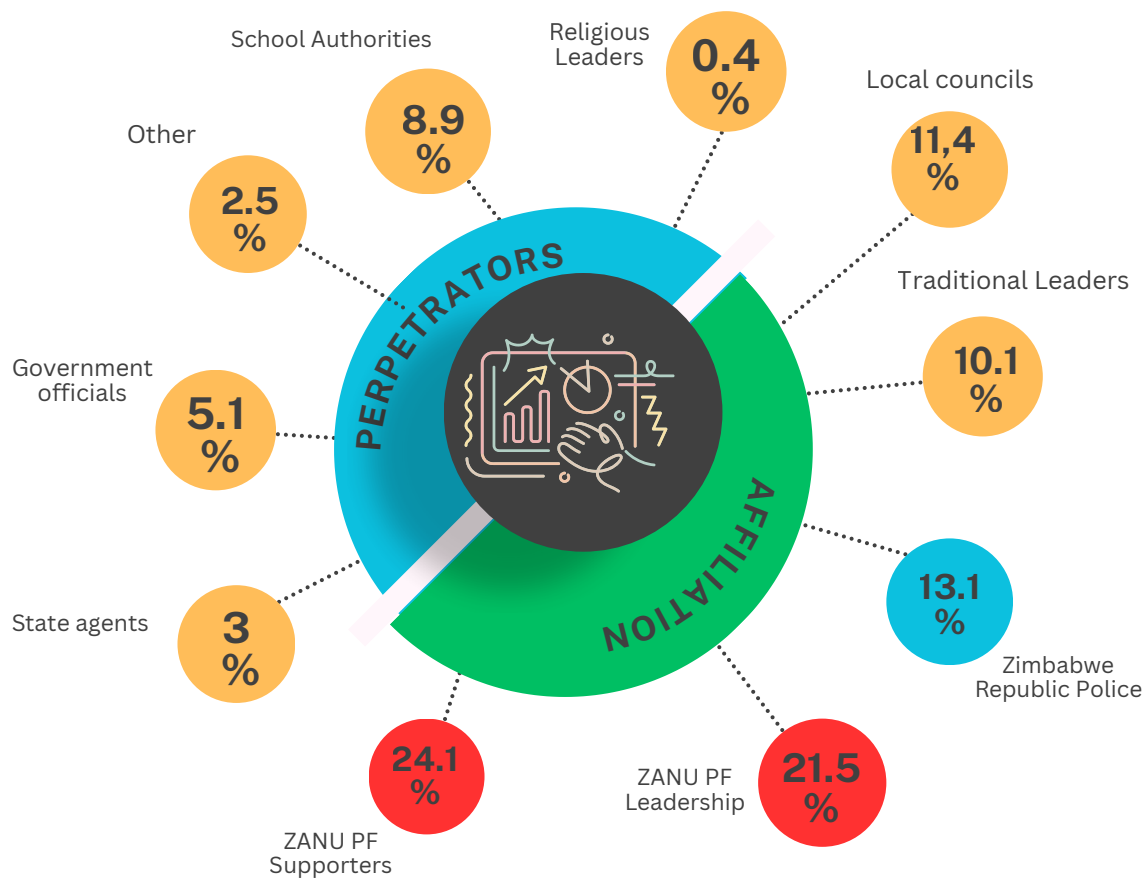
During the reporting period, ZPP documented 24 violations relating to intimidation and harassment, including threats of violence, death, and disappearance. In Murehwa North, during a ZANU PF meeting held at Zihute Hall, the party's Mashonaland East Provincial Chairperson and Minister of Local Government, Daniel Garwe, issued threats targeting perceived opposition supporters. He stated that individuals in Ward 30 who support the CCC would be excluded from community development programmes and warned that those seen associating with CCC members would face violent reprisals. These statements constitute violations of the rights to political participation, freedom of association, and equality and non-discrimination.

In Mutandahwe, Chipinge District, suspected state security agents and ruling party youths reportedly visited a community activist's home at night. When they failed to locate him, they issued death threats linked to his public stance against copper and gold mining activities by the Chinese. The group of party youths further threatened other activists, ordering the closure of the offices of a residents association as well as vandalising organisational gadgets. As a result, the targeted activists are in hiding due to fears for their safety, with their families, including children, indirectly affected through displacement, fear, and loss of livelihood stability. In Chiwundura, ruling party members linked political messaging around the 2030 presidential term extension campaign to threats against perceived opposition supporters and civil society actors, warning them not to mobilise or speak against the campaign.

In Chimanimani, a Central Intelligence Officer, Walter Mafuta (also known as Dembo), intimidated a human rights defender advocating for improved shelter for Cyclone Idai survivors living in temporary structures at Runyararo. The officer, accompanied by others, allegedly threatened the human rights defender with death and disappearance for not informing him about the petition citing that he is an authority and should have been informed. This represents a serious abuse of office and a direct attack on the work of human rights defenders and the rights of disaster-affected communities to adequate housing and dignified living conditions.

In Chimanimani West and surrounding wards, threats linked to political affiliation reportedly affected community governance and access to education structures. At Nyanyadzi Primary (Ward 8), a School Development Committee (SDC) chair was threatened by Member of Parliament Hon Kunhlande with death following a school fee enforcement dispute. In Mhandarume Ward 2, an SDC chair stepped down following threats from ruling party activists asserting that leadership positions should not be held by opposition members. Reports further suggest political pressure influencing leadership positions in community institutions such as schools, water points, gardens, and ward development structures, justified by claims of protecting Vision 2030 from perceived "disruptive" elements. Such actions undermine democratic participation, non-discrimination, and community governance rights, while creating an environment of fear and exclusion.

KEY VIOLATIONS



RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

During the reporting period, 24 human rights violations directly undermining the freedoms of assembly and association were documented demonstrating a systematic erosion of fundamental rights, and by extension, citizens’ political participation rights. In Silobela, law enforcement authorities disrupted a memorial service for Gukurahundi organised by the human rights group Ibhetshu Likazulu. The event was halted preventing communities from participating in communal healing activities. Similarly, in Zengeza West, Chitungwiza, state security agents unjustly dispersed a civic gathering organised by Students for Liberty Zimbabwe, despite organisers having secured the required police clearance. Arbitrary disruption of lawful civic activities represents an abuse of state authority and directly infringes on political rights, participation rights, and access to civic platforms necessary for democratic engagement. In Bikita East, reports indicate the politicisation of a religious and cultural space during a burial ceremony, where mourners were exposed to partisan political messaging by a leader in the Zion Christian Church Mr Makuva Mutendi who identified himself as a loyal ZANU PF supporter. The prelate went further to instruct his church followers to quit the church if they did not belong to ZANU PF. Such imposition of political loyalty within religious settings also weakens community cohesion and violates the right of individuals to participate in religious and cultural practices free from political coercion.

In Glenview, members of the ruling party have politicised access to water by requesting members to bring their identity documents and be registered to join ZANU PF in order to access water at the boreholes. Conditioning access to a life-sustaining resource on political affiliation or participation constitutes discrimination and violates the right to water, the right to health, and the right to dignity. The situation is compounded by inconsistent municipal water supply. Overall, the politicisation of essential services and civic spaces does not only violate single rights in isolation. It creates a cascading effect, undermining socio-economic rights, civil and political rights, and humanitarian protections simultaneously.



The Zimbabwe Peace Project has noted with serious concern the proposed 2026 Constitutional Amendment Bill in Zimbabwe, a legislation that could significantly reshape constitutionalism, democratic participation, and human rights protections regressively.

At the centre of concern is the proposal to replace direct presidential elections with a parliamentary selection process, potentially weakening citizens' direct political voice. The extension of presidential and parliamentary terms from five to seven years may also reduce opportunities for citizens to hold leaders accountable, particularly in a context where oversight systems can be vulnerable to political misuse.

The Bill further proposes restructuring or repealing key constitutional commissions, including the Zimbabwe Gender Commission and the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission. These institutions play critical roles in protecting vulnerable groups, promoting equality, and advancing national healing. Weakening them risks eroding specialised human rights protections and undermining reconciliation efforts essential for long-term peace.

Concerns also arise from proposals to shift voter registration functions away from the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, potentially affecting institutional independence and public trust in elections, a cornerstone of democratic governance.

The Zimbabwe Peace Project calls for inclusive widespread national consultations, protection of independent commissions, and mandatory human rights impact assessments before constitutional changes are adopted. Ultimately, constitutional reform must strengthen, not weaken, popular sovereignty, accountability, and the protection of fundamental rights for all citizens.

Emerging Human Rights Risks in Zimbabwe's Mining Communities

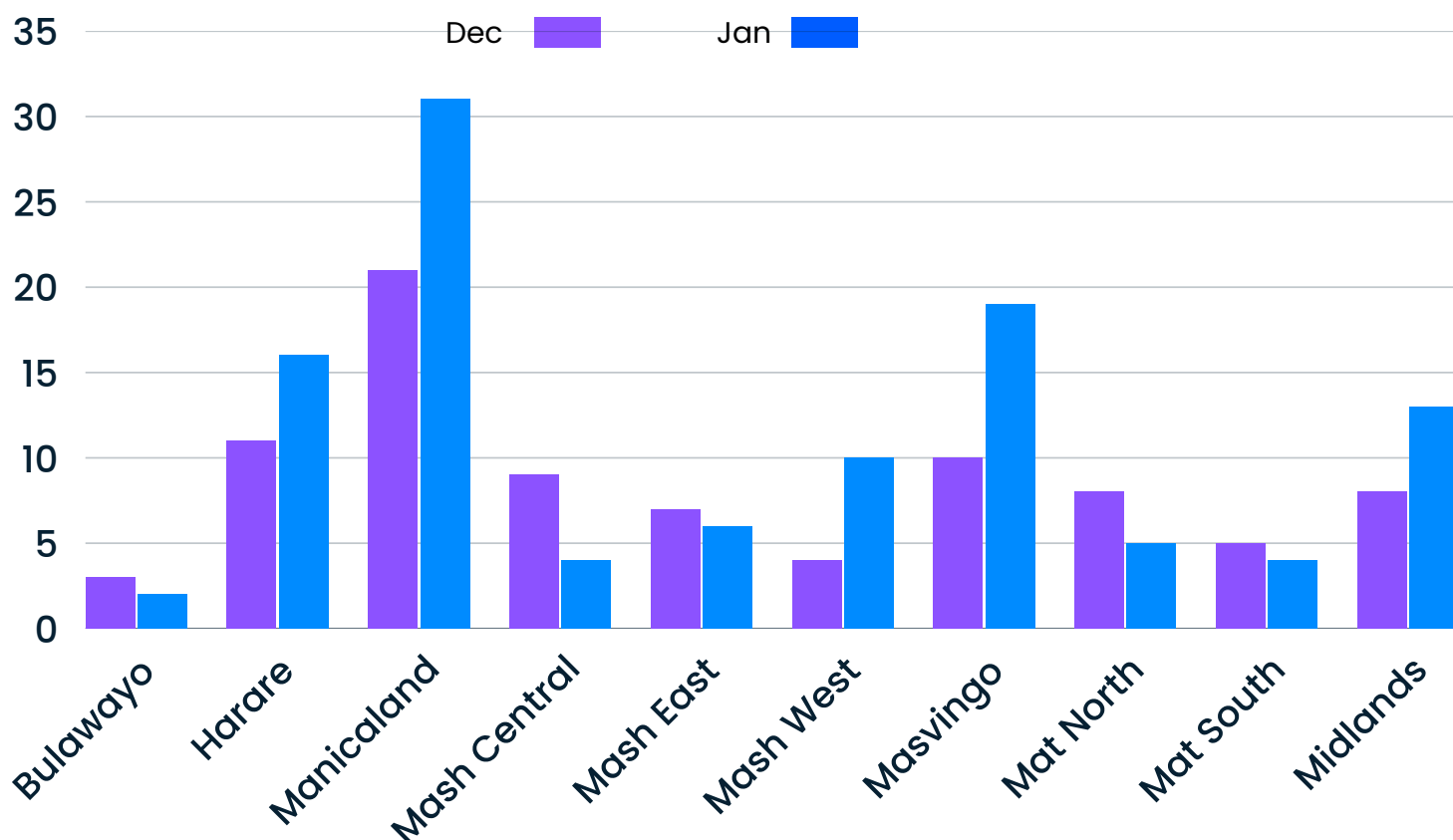
Serious human rights concerns are increasingly evident in Zimbabwe's mining communities, as weak regulatory enforcement, opaque concession processes, and minimal community consultation leave residents vulnerable to environmental hazards, displacement, and loss of livelihoods.

Recent monitoring and media reports show rising tensions around foreign-owned mining operations, particularly Chinese firms, with repeated incidents of pollution, unsafe waste management, and clashes with local communities. In areas such as Redcliff and Bikita, mining activities have reportedly threatened water sources and agricultural livelihoods, raising alarms about long-term health risks and food insecurity.

Locally reported incidents underscore these risks. In Redcliff, communities fear cyanide contamination from gold processing, while in Gwanda, the January 2026 takeover of Vuchabikwe Mine by party-affiliated actors highlights governance gaps in resource control and community protection. These events reflect broader structural weaknesses in enforcing human rights and rule of law in mining regions.

Experts and monitoring networks stress the urgent need for policies that embed enforceable human rights safeguards, including strict environmental standards, mandatory community consent, and accessible grievance mechanisms. Without such protections, mining expansion risks deepening inequality, environmental injustice, and social instability. Sustainable mining must prioritize the rights to life, health, water, and livelihoods, ensuring economic development does not come at the expense of community survival and dignity.

PROVINCIAL OUTLOOK



Mashonaland Central

In Mashonaland Central, ZPP recorded four human rights violations, mainly affecting access to education and non-discrimination. During the distribution of presidential agricultural inputs in Mt Darwin South, 8 community members, including persons with disabilities, were excluded based on perceived political affiliation, raising concerns of perpetual political discrimination and unequal access to government assistance. In addition, learners in Mazowe West among other areas were denied access to their Grade 7 results and sent home due to school fees arrears, undermining the right to education and unfairly punishing learners for financial constraints. In addition, Other related incidents reflected similar patterns of exclusion and economic barriers affecting vulnerable groups.

Matabeleland South

In Matabeleland South province, four human rights violations were documented, primarily involving political intimidation. In Gwanda at Vubachikwe Mine, ZANU PF district chairperson Mosses Langa and six other men invaded the mine on 17 January 2026, intimidated security personnel, and set themselves up to run mining activities while claiming political backing. In Bulilima West (Ward 9), community members were threatened by ruling party local leaders with losing land under the land reform programme if they did not support the “2030” political agenda. These incidents reflected patterns of political coercion and intimidation within communities.

Manicaland

In Manicaland province, 31 human rights violations were documented, largely involving state security agents, ruling party members, war veterans, and local authorities. In Chimanimani East, a Central Intelligence Officer threatened a human rights defender advocating for better living conditions for Cyclone Idai survivors, while a female ruling party MP in Chimanimani West intimidated an SDC chairperson over school fees enforcement threatening him with death. In Nyanga South (Ward 15), ruling party youth leaders disrupted a community organisation meeting and assaulted a community volunteer before looting food items, and the volunteer was later arrested and fined US\$50 for public fighting. In Chimanimani West (Rufaro Growth Point), ruling party ward leadership extorted US\$2 per member for fertiliser inputs and diverted the aid for resale. In Mutare West and surrounding areas, isolated reports included forced displacement of a resident by a war veteran using hired assailants, political interference in school governance by ruling party activists, and night-time intimidation and property destruction by suspected state security agents and ruling party youth targeting community activists. Other violations reflected similar trends of political intimidation, discrimination in aid distribution, and violations of property and personal security rights.

Bulawayo

In Bulawayo, two human rights violations were documented, mainly relating to access to services and discrimination. In Nketa, a visually impaired woman was denied bus transport from Bulawayo to South Africa despite having valid travel documents and fare, raising concerns of discrimination based on disability. Other reported concerns related to service delivery such included sewage-related flooding in Old Magwegwe (Ward 14) linked to drainage failures. Residents reported prolonged sewage blockages affecting multiple households, exposing families to serious health risks and reflecting gaps in service delivery.

Harare

In Harare, 16 human rights violations were documented, mainly involving political intolerance, abuse of authority, and denial of basic rights. In Chitungwiza South, a resident was assaulted by ruling party members for wearing clothing linked to a former MDC-A opposition party leader, while in political activist Godfrey Karembere a CCC member remains detained for mobilizing a public protest which was scheduled for the 17th of October 2025 at Unity Square in Harare. In Glenview, access to borehole water was politicised, with residents required to provide identity details and register with the ruling party to access water. In Epworth, learning was disrupted on 21 January 2026 to allow a partisan donation event involving the First Lady Auxilia Mnangagwa prioritising ruling party supporters, affecting children's right to education and equal access to aid. At Kuwadzana High 2, four learners were reportedly assaulted by the school head over unpaid fees, raising concerns over corporal punishment and access to education. In Zengeza West (Ward 14), a community gathering of 17 people was disrupted by three state agents despite having clearance to hold a civic event, raising freedom of assembly concerns. Other human rights breaches included municipal police confiscating vendors' goods and requiring fines of about US\$35 for their release, reflecting ongoing livelihood and economic rights concerns.

Mashonaland East

In Mashonaland East, six human rights violations were documented, primarily involving political intimidation. In Murehwa North, at a ZANU PF meeting at Zihute Hall, Provincial Chairperson and Minister Daniel Garwe threatened individuals in Ward 30, warning that those supporting the opposition CCC would be excluded from community programs and that anyone associating with CCC members could face violent reprisals.

Masvingo

In Masvingo province, 19 human rights violations were documented, mainly involving abuse of authority, political intimidation, and denial of access to essential services. On 14 January 2026, at SimRac Shopping Complex, a female vendor was assaulted and arbitrarily arrested by three male police officers, with charges later changed to indecent exposure, and her goods destroyed, in a case of brazen harassment of informal traders. In the health sector, patients at Mashoko Hospital and Gawa Clinic face exorbitant user fees with limited medication availability, and treatment delays, affecting vulnerable patients including a 7-year-old girl and a 14-year-old learner referred for treatment. In Masvingo North, traditional leadership imposed strict clearance requirements for civic activities, raising concerns over freedom of assembly and association with potential effects on political rights. In Gutu West, a ruling party supporter threatened a person with disability with violence, while in Ward 5, ruling party leaders reportedly ordered monitoring and intimidation of opposition supporters. In Bikita East, partisan political messaging was introduced into a religious burial setting by a church leader aligned to the ruling party. Other incidents reflected similar patterns of political intimidation, discrimination, and barriers to accessing services.

Midlands

In Midlands province, 13 human rights violations were documented, involving environmental rights concerns, political violence, and restrictions on civic freedoms. In Redcliff and Kwekwe (Cactus Dam area), communities raised concerns over potential water contamination linked to gold processing chemicals from mining activities near residential areas and downstream farming and religious communities, threatening the rights to health, safe water, and a clean environment.

In Zhombe (Ward 14), a resident was assaulted by a ruling party youth leader after demanding transparency in agricultural input distribution, and although the perpetrator was convicted, political interference prevented enforcement of the sentence, undermining the rule of law. Near Gumbure Primary School, police disrupted a gathering of more than 45 people linked to opposition leader Nelson Chamisa over clearance issues, raising concerns over freedom of assembly. In Chiwundura, ruling party members threatened suspected opposition and civil society supporters, including warnings of possible eviction linked to the “2030” agenda. In Silobela, police stopped a Gukurahundi memorial service organised by a human rights group, citing authorisation issues.

Mashonaland West

In Mashonaland West province, 10 human rights violations were documented, mainly involving abuse of authority, political violence, and alleged state security violations. In Sanyati, violence linked to ruling party supporters resulted in the severe assault of an individual during a dispute involving party members, with the victim later arrested and released on bail pending court proceedings. In Magunje, irregularities were reported in agricultural input distribution, where 29 village heads reportedly received 621 fertiliser bags instead of 860, with some inputs allegedly diverted to ruling party supporters.

Matabeleland North

In Matabeleland North province, five human rights violations were documented, involving discrimination in government sponsored aid distribution and political interference in community leadership. On 9 January 2026, in Ward 29 (Emphafeni), farmers reported irregularities in agricultural input distribution, including selective allocation of groundnuts and maize seed to ruling party supporters, and sharing of 50kg fertiliser bags among three farmers, raising concerns over fairness and equal access to government assistance. In Binga South, a village secretary was removed from his position for not aligning with ruling party positions, affecting his political rights and freedom of association.

Conclusion

The human rights situation in Zimbabwe, as reflected in January's monitoring, underscores the persistence of structural vulnerabilities and the systemic nature of rights infringements. Persisting trends in rights abuses point to a gap between formal rights protections and lived realities on the ground. Particularly concerning are violations that affect already marginalised populations, such as persons with disabilities, women, and communities facing displacement or environmental hazards.

Addressing these challenges requires urgent, coordinated, and rights-centered interventions and the political will of diverse duty bearers to respond effectively. Strengthening accountability mechanisms is key. Without deliberate, enforceable measures that prioritise equity, safety, and dignity, the current trajectory risks deepening social inequality, entrenching impunity, and undermining public trust in governance. A holistic approach, combining legal accountability, community empowerment, and structural reform, remains critical to safeguarding human rights and fostering a culture of respect, justice, and inclusion across Zimbabwe.



**Report
Human Rights Violations**

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