



# WTPZ Brief: Electoral Malpractices

**Pre-election: May 30 – 27 July, 2018**

**Report Date: 28 July, 2018**

## Introduction

We the People of Zimbabwe (WTPZ) has set up a structure of peace monitors, in which **7,700+** citizen monitors across every province in the country are currently tracking and reporting incidents in their communities through the WTPZ call center. This report is an analysis of electoral malpractice incidents over 7 weeks.

Electoral malpractices are acts which impact the fairness and legality of elections, by seeking to change the behaviours of voters or election results (note that threats and acts of violence are covered in separate reports). Between 30 May and 27 July 2018, WTPZ has received 1701 incidents from 1114 calls. **442 of these calls included electoral malpractices** in addition to 601 calls including threats of violence, and 292 calls including people being forced to do what they do not want to.

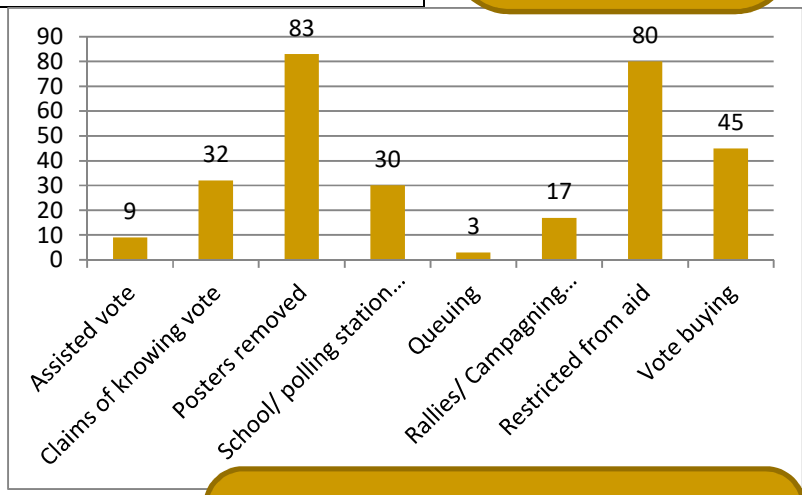
## What electoral malpractices have been recorded or threatened?

Before elections
<p><b>Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) slips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>39</b> counts of malpractice with regards to using voter registration slips and personal identifying information as a threat that there is a way to find out how people voted and to target those not voting for ZANU-PF.</li> <li>➤ <b>44</b> reports of people being forced to give information from their voter registration slips</li> <li>➤ <b>59</b> reports of people being forced to give personal information such as name, ID, and voting intentions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Misuse of polling stations and schools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>28</b> counts of schools being misused during the campaign period, including prospective councilors and MPs taking over schools to hold political party rallies, and teachers and/or students being forced to attend.</li> <li>➤ <b>8</b> counts of other designated polling stations being misused</li> </ul>
<p><b>Campaign related issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>94</b> reports of campaign posters being unlawfully removed. In most cases these were opposition posters</li> <li>➤ <b>21</b> counts of rallies and meetings being disturbed or blocked either by members of other parties or by Rural District Councils (RDCs) which disproportionately allow ZANU-PF access to meeting spaces</li> <li>➤ <b>123</b> reports said people were being forced to attend ZANU-PF rallies, and <b>7</b> reports mentioned people being blocked from attending opposition rallies of their choice.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Vote- buying and misuse of state resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>109</b> reports of people being restricted from aid and donor goods, including food and agricultural inputs, with goods only being given to those who support or agree to vote for ZANU-PF</li> <li>➤ <b>60</b> reports of vote buying, where citizens are offered aid and agricultural inputs in exchange for votes or party membership, or are offered goods including food, soap and cash</li> <li>➤ <b>9</b> reports of people being promised that they would receive goods or inputs in exchange for votes, and a further <b>18</b> reports that people would no longer receive aid if they did not vote for ZANU-PF.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Traditional leaders interference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>217</b> reports (<b>19%</b> of all reports) included traditional leaders being involved in electoral processes. In most cases they were perpetrators or were coerced or threatened to interfere in campaign processes.</li> <li>➤</li> <li>➤ <b>7</b> reports of traditional leaders acting as polling agents on election day.</li> </ul>

Election day threats
<b>Assisted voting:</b> ➤ <b>17</b> reports of people being told to pretend they could not read or write and had to be assisted to vote.
<b>Surveillance within polling stations on election day:</b> ➤ Reports of threats of surveillance within the polling stations. Perpetrators claim that voters choices will be tracked from their BVR information and/or surveillance cameras.
<b>Queuing to vote:</b> ➤ <b>3</b> reports of village heads planning for villagers to line up in a particular order on voting day. This causes citizens to think village heads will be able to tell who voted for whom if they vote in order. ➤ <b>7</b> people reported they were being given orders of how to behave on election day.

*In focus group discussions with peace champions, groups stated that in some areas, traditional leaders or ZANU-PF officials were waiting just outside the BVR stations to force community members to surrender their registration numbers.*

*War veterans in Mbire District are threatening villagers saying that if they do not vote for ZANU PF there will be another war in Zimbabwe. They also continued to tell people to lie that they are not able to write so that they may be assisted to vote. They have already provided the names of those that are going to assist in voting.*



*Sitting councillor in Bulilima is threatening elderly people to vote for ZANU-PF. He gave instructions that all the elderly will assemble at his house and then go with him to the polling station to vote.*

**Conclusion: What are the implications?**

The pre-election malpractices recorded raise questions about processes that lead up to the election including the BVR registration period and campaign periods. Citizens are expressing fear that their vote will not be secret, and there will be repercussions for the ‘wrong’ choice.

WTPZ is encouraging human rights organisations and observer missions to watch carefully for:

- Citizens directed to queue in a particular manner or order by people who are not ZEC officials.
- Polling stations at schools that may have been previously appropriated by political parties for campaign use, or polling stations being controlled by political party members.
- People being forced to request assisted voting, heightened numbers of people requesting assistance, assistance being given without request, or assistants helping multiple people.
- Fears expressed or observations of surveillance within polling stations including cameras, unauthorized people, and placement of polling booths.