



MONTHLY
M**NITORING**
REPORT

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**ZIMBABWE
PEACE
PROJECT**

It is the politics and not the space satellite

The United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Ms Hilal Elver who recently completed an 11 day mission after an invitation was extended by the government from 18 to 28 November 2019, exposes the dire state of the economy which has resulted in acute food insecurity in Zimbabwe. Currently, many citizens are surviving on one meal a day and some have resorted to dehumanising means to obtain food for their families. In her preliminary report, the Special Rapporteur elaborated that *“the most vulnerable segments of society, including the elderly, children and women, are forced to rely on early marriage, and sex trade to obtain food, behavioural patterns that often are accompanied by domestic violence, as coping mechanisms to mitigate the serious challenges they are facing. This kind of struggle for subsistence affects their physical wellbeing and self-respect. It creates behaviour and conditions that violate their most fundamental human rights.”*

The Special Rapporteur’s report is a clarion call for the speedy address of the grim situation in Zimbabwe. She clearly articulated that women and children are mostly bearing the brunt of the food crisis. The Special Rapporteur stated that *“The vast majority of children I met in the rural parts of Masvingo and in Mwenezi, as well as in informal settings in the suburbs of Harare, appeared severely stunted and underweight due to reduced food availability caused by high levels of poverty and the consequence of the recurrent drought and floods.”* She added that she saw effects of infants who are deprived of breast milk as their mothers are failing to access adequate food to produce breast milk. This, she explained has a far reaching effect on the health and welfare of the children.

The report confirms that almost 8 million Zimbabweans in both rural and urban areas will need food and other aid until March 2020. However, the vulnerability of this population is being exacerbated by the blatant politicization of aid and deprivation for those perceived to be opposition supporters. This was evidenced by the rise in the number of cases related to food and other aid to 55 cases recorded during the month of November up from the October cases at 33. Masvingo province recorded the highest number of this violation at 22 followed by Mashonaland Central province with 10.

Junior doctors in public health institutions have been on strike since September 3, 2019, and on 26 November 2019 senior doctors joined the job action. Citizens are failing to access healthcare as the work stoppage continues without a solution in sight.

The lack of health care professionals in public hospitals is negatively impacting on maternal health care as the majority of women cannot afford the exorbitant fees charged by private health institutions. Some have resorted to unregistered backyard services such as those offered by Esther Zinyoro who was widely reported in the media.

Zinyoro's two roomed apartment in Mbare was being used as a 'maternity' centre where she delivered upwards of 10 babies in a week. Images of naked women writhing in agony on a floor covered with canvas material made the rounds on social media, leading to widespread condemnation and outcry. Of concern is the fact that the first lady Mrs Auxillia Mnangagwa visited Zinyoro's premises and commended her for her hard work and donated supplies such as food stuffs and latex gloves. This move by the first lady may well be perceived as a subtle endorsement of Zinyoro, despite the fact that she has never received any formal training as a midwife, operates as an unregistered health institution and has no professional experience in dealing with complications which may arise from the delivery process and puts both the mother and child at risk of contracting disease. The visit also displays misplaced priorities and a lack of political will and commitment to see an end to the myriad of challenges facing the health delivery system.

The continued impasse between the government and health professionals is distressing as Zimbabweans are suffering and dying from illnesses which could easily be treated. Incredulously, government has fired over 435 doctors with no indications of how they will be replaced. This is a worrying situation which reflects a government that does not care about the welfare of its citizens.

Minister of Finance and Economic Development Mthuli Ncube presented the ZWD63, 66 billion 2020 budget titled "Gearing for Higher Productivity, Growth and Job creation". Notable and commendable changes were that the education and health sectors received the highest allocations at ZWD10, 7 billion and ZWD6, 5 billion respectively; a shift from the past where the defence ministry received the highest allocation. Furthermore, government set aside ZWD200 million to procure sanitary wear for disadvantaged women and girls, a welcome relief for millions of girls

for whom sanitary wear was inaccessible due to high prices. Interestingly, while the majority of citizens are reeling in extreme poverty the budget statement also set aside resources for a space satellite.

Minister Ncube however announced the continuation of subsidies to Command Agriculture and Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) while scrapping grain subsidies to grain millers. The Grain Millers Association of Zimbabwe (GMZ) subsequently announced an increase in the price of mealie meal from ZWD55 to ZWD101, 66. The public outcry that followed led President Emmerson Mnangagwa to restore the subsidies. He stated that he had not been consulted before the decision was taken.

Case File Highlights

Discrimination in the distribution of food and other aid contributed 30.1% of the total violations recorded in the month under review. In a number of instances opposition supporters have been explicitly told that government aid is for ruling Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (Zanu PF) party supporters. In some cases, officials from Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services (Agritex) charged with distributing aid are victimised for attempting to distribute aid fairly. This was noted in an incident that occurred on 6 November 2019 when Cotton Company (COTTCO) launched an exercise of distributing inputs to farmers at the Chireya Cotton Marketing Board (CMB) depot. The distribution exercise which was well attended ended up being politicised as farmers were told by Zanu PF members, Henry Chidzivo and one Chiherenge that inputs were from the president so everyone was supposed to support the president and his party. An Agritex officer who objected to the politicisation of the distribution process was verbally attacked, accused of being Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and threatened with abduction, or transfer out of Chireya.

In Zaka Central, ward 19, at Jerera Growth Point, villagers gathered to receive their allocation of farming inputs under the Presidential Inputs Scheme on 4 November 2019. Some Zanu PF officials, among them a woman named Mahembe hijacked the process, pushing aside the Agritex officer and the village head in charge of distribution. The two were accused of intending to distribute the aid without taking into account political party affiliation. Mahembe and her colleagues therefore took over the distribution and ensured that opposition supporters did not get any of the aid.

In some instances, Agritex officers are implicated in depriving citizens of food and other aid. On 7 November 2019 in ward 11, Rushinga district at Chongoma Primary School about 9 Zanu PF activists deprived 35 villagers of fertilizer and maize seed from the Presidential Input Scheme. The activists; VaDombo VaKatumbu who are Agritex Officers, Samuel Madzinga Nhema, Chihwato (village heads), Petronella Matsa, Shingirai Gogoda, Siza Mudziwedombo (Youth Chairperson), Mai Marufu and Maxwell Phiri withheld inputs from beneficiaries and shared among themselves. Some of the culprits traded the inputs for goats while others were seen transporting the inputs at night around 8pm. VaDombo reportedly traded the inputs with Mr Chihwato in exchange for three goats.

The continued discrimination in distributing aid is a cause for conflict. In Gokwe Gumunyu, Tchoda Business Centre ward 15, Councilor Mutanzi pointed out that youth officers and Zanu PF members who were polling agents during the 2018 elections were supposed to get their allocations before any villager could get their share. This angered some youths present who stated that Zanu PF had for long looted inputs under their watch and would not allow it to continue. They then took 15, 10kgs bags of maize seed and left telling the councillor to report anywhere as nothing would happen to them.

It takes just one individual to make a conscious decision to break the cycle of corruption and discrimination as recorded in Mberengwa East. On 1 November at Mataruse ward B2, village head Menias Zhou a Zanu PF supporter refused a widowed MDC supporter her share of the Presidential Farming Inputs. The village head's excuse was that the beneficiary had not paid the village tax. Councilor Dinga Hove was then consulted and cautioned Zhou stating that the inputs program was not selective and that depriving someone their aid is illegal, leading to the widow later receiving her allocation.

The shrinking democratic space in the second republic is evidenced by the increasingly intolerant environment that is prevailing in the country. Contradictions are notable as the state presents a façade of upholding the rule of law at the same time making concerted efforts to block people's democratic rights. On 6 November 2019 police halted an Apex Council demonstration, even though civil servants had sought and obtained police permission to demonstrate. As petitioners marched towards the Public Service Commission offices, they were blocked by anti-riot police officers, who barricaded roads and harassed protesters. Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (ARTUZ) President, Obert Masaraure, Secretary General Robson Chere and Tryvine Musokeri were manhandled and dragged

by police. Chere sustained bruises during the tussle and the petition they intended to submit at the Public Service Commission was destroyed in the melee.

In a related development, President Mnangagwa signed the Maintenance of Peace and Order Bill (MOPO) into law, hardly making any significant change as the law is similar to its draconian predecessor the Public Order and Security Act (POSA). Already, the law has been used by the state to deny the opposition MDC convening a number of meetings during the course of the month.

Furthermore, it was implemented in a barbaric manner on 20 November 2019 when police assaulted approximately 60 people who had gathered outside Morgan Tsvangirai House in Harare to listen to MDC President, Advocate Nelson Chamisa's HOPE of the Nation Address. A reinforcement of 50-80 anti-riot police officers descended on party supporters with baton sticks and fired teargas canisters to disperse the crowd. Many people including passers-by, journalists and even a 10 month old child were assaulted and sustained serious physical injuries as they were caught up in the commotion.

On 22 November 2019, five Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) officers were attacked in Harare Central Business District (CBD) by a gang of 16 assailants. According to the police the officers were beaten and injured by the gang. The gang also robbed a civilian of US \$ 100.00 and ZWD 1900.00 after assaulting him.

The tension is not only between the state and citizens, there is increasing conflict among political party supporters. In Hwange East on 13 November 2019 a group of eight Zanu PF activists threatened to beat up and destroy the home of an individual who had criticised the 'New Dispensation.' The victim, who is a known Mthwakazi activist, criticised the Mnangagwa administration during a budget meeting conducted by the Victoria Falls Municipality stating that 'they lacked foresight and were clueless in turning around the fortunes of the country.' This angered the Zanu PF activists who confronted the victim and threatened him in full view of the public.

In Zengeza East ward 6 an MDC activist was assaulted by a gang of six unidentified Zanu PF male youths in the Nyatsime area. On 6 November 2019 the victim was attacked with iron bars on his way home and sustained serious

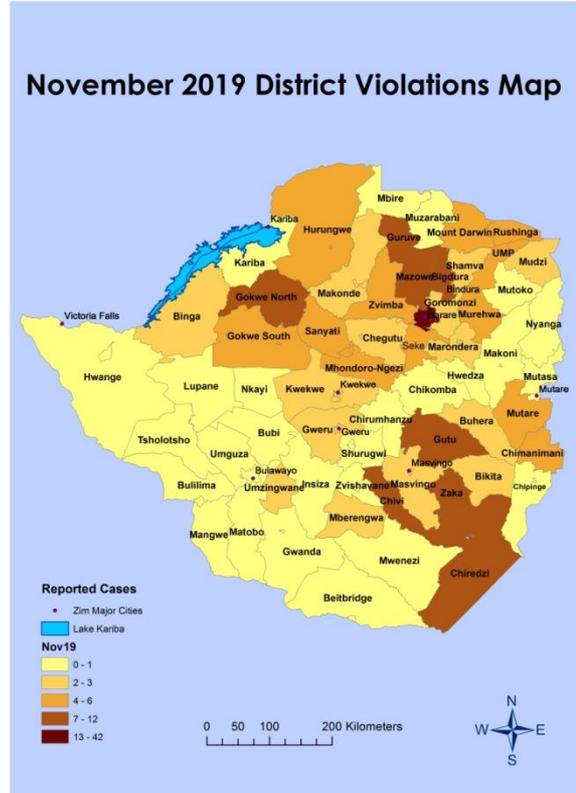
injuries. The youth accused the victim of discouraging people from attending the anti-sanctions march which was held on the 25th of October 2019.

The ruling party's role in perpetuating division was also notable in an incident reported in Uzumba at Mutawatawa Business Centre on 6 November 2019. An estimated 200 villagers were forced to convene at the Business Centre by Zanu PF, where Councilor Shepherd Mushamba harassed and intimidated the group, particularly village heads due to their failure to produce registers with names of those who are alleged to be undermining the President. The perpetrators threatened that there would be penalties if village heads failed to produce the lists in the next meeting.

The persistent nature of discrimination is notable in that employment opportunities are also being awarded along partisan lines. In Gokwe Chireya on 5 November 2019, the Chireya District Development Fund base camp led by one Machope who is the supervisor recruited a sizeable number of labourers to clear rubble along roads in ward 4. The recruitment was politicised as anyone who wanted to be hired was asked to bring a reference letter from their village head indicating that they were members of the Zanu PF party. Known opposition supporters were told to be 'clean' first, inferring that they should defect to the ruling party.

In Mt Darwin South on 15 November 2019, people seeking employment at Pfura Council offices in ward 26 were advised to get recommendation letters from Zanu PF party chairperson Paradzai Dumbura. Reports are that Kenneth Zinga, a council employee told a job seeker that he was only accepting employment applications from individuals with ruling party recommendations signed by the party's chairperson.

Dashboard of Statistics



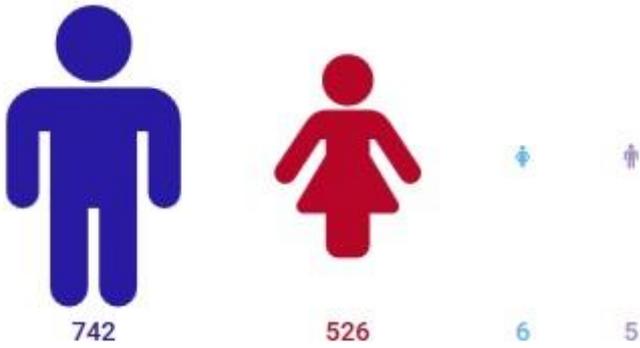
Distribution of violence by type across provinces

ACTS	Midlands	Byo	Mat. South	Mat. North	Masvingo	Manicaland	Harare	Mash. East	Mash. West	Mash. Central	TOTAL
Killing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rape/Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kidnapping/abduction	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Assault	2	0	0	0	1	1	13	0	0	0	17
Theft/looting	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	4	4	8	20
Discrimination	7	0	1	1	21	3	2	8	7	13	63
MDP	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Torture	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unlawful Detention	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Intimidation /harassment	11	1	2	2	22	6	20	10	9	20	103
Displacement	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Attempted Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Attempted Abduction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Banned Political Party Mtg	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Disrupted Political Mtg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	21	1	3	3	44	12	42	22	20	41	209

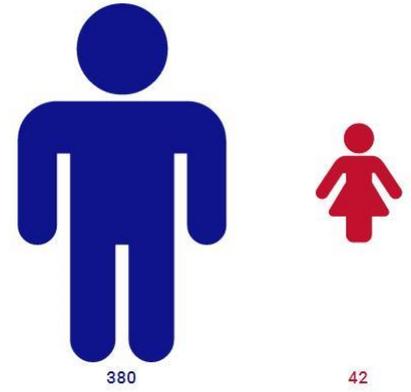


Food and Other Aid Violations

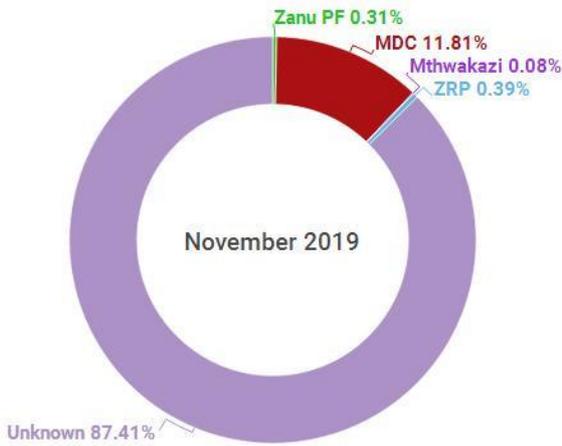




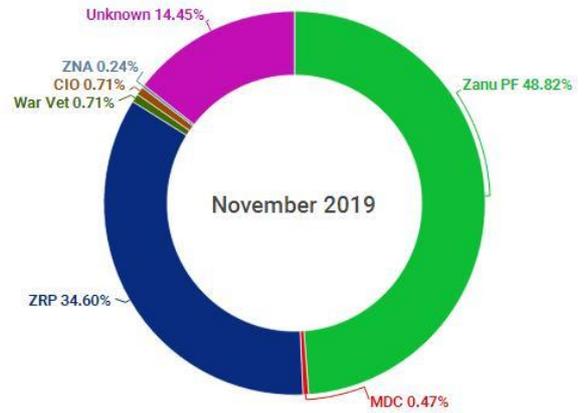
Victims by Gender



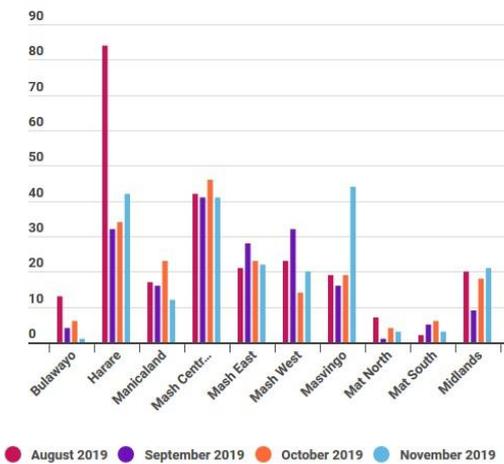
Perpetrators by Gender



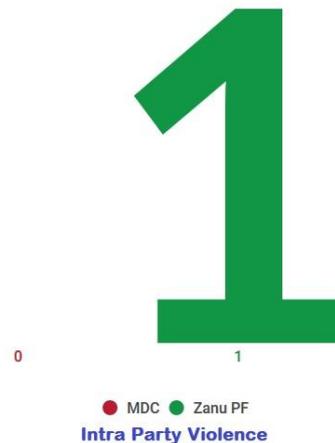
Victims by Affiliation



Perpetrators by Affiliation



Violence across Provinces



Overall Analysis

Citizens continue to wallow in desperate living conditions as the environment becomes more repressive. The health crisis is coming onto 100 days with junior, middle and senior doctors on strike citing incapacitation and poor working conditions. The response by government of firing doctors instead of engaging in dialogue with a view to finding a lasting solution to the crisis is concerning and must be condemned in the strongest terms. Zimbabweans are dying from treatable illnesses had there been health professionals in public health institutions.

The Zimbabwe dollar has shed approximately 564%¹ of its value since its re-introduction in February this year. This currency depreciation brought with it a myriad of depressed economic conditions while poor rainfall received in the last farming season also led to poor harvest and resultant food shortages. The food crisis in Zimbabwe is desperate as captured by the Special Rapporteur's damning report on the country's food insecurity which states that *"Zimbabwe counts amongst the four highest food insecure states, alongside conflict ravaged countries"*.

The continued politicisation of food to already vulnerable groups has created an even more disenfranchised and hungry population which has resulted in an increase in sex work, number of school dropouts and early marriages.

The Special Rapporteur reported that *"women and men I met expressed their frustration at being dependent on food assistance and told me that they would rather receive the necessary resources and tools to realise their own potential and skills"*. It is therefore critical for government to pursue policies, that ensure that people are capacitated to produce their own food in order to break the cycle of dependency. Furthermore, as expanded by Elver it is imperative that *"in accordance with the Zimbabwe Constitution, the government should permit all people to have access to food aid without any reference to their regional origin or residence, or political affiliation. The government should instruct local authorities in charge of beneficiary and distribution lists to abide by the principle of non-discrimination"*.

The 2020 Budget unfortunately did not yield much joy for Zimbabweans. Although education and health ministries received the highest budgetary allocations, the allocations fall below the Dakar and Abuja Declarations which stipulate that 20% of a national budget should be channelled towards education and 15% for health, respectively. In Ncube's budgetary statement, health received 10,2% and education 16,8%. According to Dr Kanyenze, a

¹ <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2019/11/zimdollar-plunges-564-since-feb/>

renowned economist, 90% of the education budget goes towards human resources, leaving a mere 10% to cater for the rest of education needs. The austerity measures that are currently in place do not support the realisation of socio-economic rights as evidenced by the continued incapacitation of key public sector employees, particularly health and education professionals.

According to economists although efforts were being made by Minister of Finance to encourage market forces to drive the economy, failure by government in creating employment means that they constantly need to provide subsidies to cushion suffering Zimbabweans from price hikes, *“Government must create employment for its people, failure to do so as consequence, would mean that we have to live with subsidies. This leads to uncontrolled expenditure and is unsustainable in the long run. If you look at the government’s appetite for spending and the retention of subsidies there will certainly be an inflationary impact on the economy”* said Mr Christopher Mugaga the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC) Chief Executive.

Mugaga further alluded to the hasty enactment then reversal of policies whereby Minister Ncube announced that grain subsidies would be scrapped, then President Mnangagwa announced that they would be re-instated stating that these policy inconsistencies will have a negative impact on the economy. *“The reversal of policies barely a month after being announced leaves Zimbabwe in a quandary. This is basically command economy and not one led by market forces. As it stands Minister Ncube did not budget for grain subsidies, but with the reversal of this decision this means he has no choice but to come up with a supplementary budget at cost to government.”*

This bleak picture painted by Mugaga brings to focus the need for a resolution to the country’s crisis. This was well captured by South Africa’s Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Naledi Pandor who stated that economic issues affecting Zimbabwe can only be resolved after a resolution on the political front. She said *“It seems clear as we support the call for an end of economic sanctions that the political dynamics that we observe are inextricably linked to the economic solutions and thus the politics and the economic as well as the social need to be confronted simultaneously. We are not going to achieve the economic resolution without resolving the political intractable hostility and lack of ... or social conjoining on finding a national solution.”*² it is statements such as this

² <https://www.voazimbabwe.com/a/zimbabwe-naledi-pandor-economic-problems/5173440.html>

that make it imperative for the regional bloc to assist its member deal with issues that might end up affecting the entire region if not tackled in time and with urgency they deserve.

Police disturbingly continued occupying the second highest percentage of perpetrators at 34.6%, up from 22.29% recorded in October 2019. Instead of protecting citizens, they have become a danger to society as evidenced by their continued brutality on citizens. The trend of victim affiliation remaining unknown continued with 87,41% of victims not revealing their affiliation; an indicator of the entrenched fear within citizens.

In response to the above issues, ZPP calls for:

- The country's leadership to come down from their entrenched positions and engage in an inclusive and all-encompassing dialogue which will yield positive results in the resolution to the crisis that is bedeviling the country.
- The speedy intervention to the food crisis in the country by ensuring that there is equitable and transparent distribution of food and other aid.
- That government becomes a protagonist in the protection of civil liberties through allowing people to assemble as provided for in Section 58 of the constitution and the freedom to demonstrate and petition in Section 59. Violence should never be the answer.

If you are concerned about acts of human rights violations in your community ZPP encourages you to get in touch on WhatsApp numbers: +263 774 883 406 and +263 774 883 417

ABOUT ZPP

The organisation was founded in 2000 by church-based and human rights organisations. The current members of ZPP are Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJPZ), Counselling Services Unit (CSU), Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights), Civic Education Network Trust (CIVNET), and Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ).

ZPP was established with the objective of monitoring, documenting and building peace and promoting the peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts. The Zimbabwe Peace Project seeks to foster dialogue and political tolerance through non-partisan peace monitoring activities, mainly through monitors who document the violations of rights in the provinces.

The monitors, who at full complement stand at 420, constitute the core pool of volunteers, supported by four Regional Coordinators. The Regional Coordinators relate with the national office headed by the National Director and programme officers in various units.