



ZIMBABWE

REPORT OF FACT FINDING MISSION TO ZIMBABWE HARARE 9 – 17 AUGUST 2010

Country of Origin Information Service

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Contents

Introduction

Executive summary

1. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND DISTRIBUTION OF AID

a) Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

If not, what constraints are placed on your organisation?

Who/what is responsible for these constraints and how does it affect your work?

b) Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

Is aid getting to those most in need of it?

c) Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

Does a person's actual or perceived political affiliation result in discrimination in the receipt of aid?

Has there been any political manipulation of aid – either NGO or state provision?

2. THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

a) What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

Is the local political environment freer or more restricted since the formation of the GNU?

Have supporters of all political parties been able to gather or protest without interference? What type of interference? Who?

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more politically open?

3. POLITICAL VIOLENCE

a) Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

What have been the main reasons for recent political violence?

Who are the perpetrators of violence?

What recent examples do you have (nature and frequency of incidents)? (Also profiles of victims of violence – why are these people targeted?)

b) What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?

Are the police able to operate independently?

Are police in some areas more partisan than in other areas?

Are the police partisan in their response to political violence and persecution?

How do the police identify particular targets for persecution?

Are the police active or reactive to political events?

c) Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

If so, why? What makes a difference in this respect?
 Is violence/repression more or less centred in urban or rural areas – or is there no difference?
 Are areas that strongly support ZANU-PF or the MDC more or less prone to violence towards the opposite group?
 What causes violence to occur in these areas (e.g. political meetings, party regalia worn)? Details of specific incidents

4. INTERNAL RELOCATION

a) Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

Is there any requirement to officially register in a new area – if so with whom? If so, how is this enforced?
 Is there any differentiation in restrictions, depending on area? If so, where?

5. INTERVIEWS WITH RETURNEES (COMPLETE TRANSCRIPTS)

Annexes

Annex A – List of outline questions sent to sources before interview

Annex B – List of sources interviewed by the delegation

Annex C – Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms

Annex D – Transcripts of meetings with NGOs

Anonymous - international organisation

Anonymous - organisation working in Zimbabwe

Bulawayo Agenda (BA)

Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association (BPRA)

Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe (CCJPZ)

Commercial Farmers Union (CFU)

Counselling Services Unit (CSU)

Anonymous – a faith based organisation working in Zimbabwe

Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Anonymous – an anonymous organisation

Radio Dialogue

Research and Advocacy Unit (RAU)

Anonymous – international NGO

Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (ZHRNGOF)

Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights)

Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights (ZADHR)

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR)

Annex E – Returnees

Selection criteria

Questions for returnees

Annex F – References to source material

[Return to contents](#)

Introduction

The Zimbabwe Fact Finding Mission (FFM) was undertaken by the Country of Origin Information Service (COIS) with assistance from the Country Specific Policy Team (CSPT) - both part of the UK Border Agency (UKBA) - and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The FFM was led by Debbie Goodier, Senior Researcher in COIS. Andrew Jones, First Secretary Migration at the British Embassy, Harare, and Mark Walker, head of unit, CSPT, also took part in the visit.

The purpose of the FFM was to gather information on the situation in Zimbabwe since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in February 2009, which may be relevant to the consideration of asylum applications in the United Kingdom (UK).

In particular, the FFM sought to obtain information on the following issues:

- The treatment of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the distribution of aid
- The political environment since March 2009
- Political violence since March 2009
- Internal re-location

The FFM sought to interview a range of sources representing differing perspectives on the issues being considered. All meetings were arranged by the British Embassy in Harare. All of the main national and international NGOs were contacted ahead of the FFM.

To gain an impression of the experiences of a sample of returnees the FFM also met seven Zimbabweans who had claimed asylum in the UK but subsequently voluntarily returned to Zimbabwe in 2009 and 2010. The interviewees were identified and selected by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

The list of contacts interviewed was determined by availability and time constraints with most meetings taking place between 10 and 17 August 2010. Where the FFM were unable to schedule appointments during their visit, interviews were conducted solely by Andrew Jones (FCO). Details of who was in attendance at the interviews can be found at the start of each interview record transcript.

All interlocutors were sent the list of questions to be asked at the interview in advance and advised that the information obtained may be published in a report placed in the public domain and/or used by immigration officials to assist the Immigration and Asylum Chamber (IAC) when it considers a Zimbabwe Country Guidance case in October 2010.

The document sent to NGOs in advance of meetings is at [Annex A](#).

Given the time constraints, the report is presented as a collation of the agreed notes of answers provided by each interlocutor in response to the questions asked. A short summary of the information gathered from different sources has been provided at the start of each section on the main thematic questions and the section recording the responses of the returnees to Zimbabwe.

All information gathered has been attributed to sources and no attempt has been made to provide any analysis of the material. Several of the sources interviewed asked to remain anonymous and to be identified in general terms.

The list of sources interviewed is at [Annex B](#).

A glossary of acronyms and abbreviations is at [Annex C](#).

NGO interview transcripts are at [Annex D](#).

The selection criteria for returnees and questions sent to them in advance are at [Annex E](#)

Any comments regarding this Report or suggestions for additional source material are very welcome and should be submitted to UKBA at the address/email address below.

Country of Origin Information Service

UK Border Agency
St Anne House
20-26 Wellesley Road
Croydon, CR0 9XB
United Kingdom

Email: cois@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/country_reports.html

[Return to contents](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Political environment

Most organisations interviewed reported that there had been an opening-up of the political environment since the formation of the Government of National Unity in February 2009. However, uncertainty over the future and doubts about the sustainability of the current governing coalition were a concern.

Most organisations reported that the parliamentary constitutional outreach process (COPAC), which is consulting with the public about the content of the new constitution, had led to renewed reports of intimidation and violence. As a result, there were fears that the current situation may deteriorate ahead of national elections which are likely to take place in the next couple of years.

Political violence

All organisations reported that current levels of violence were down on that experienced during 2008. However, all organisations reported that low-level violence, or the threat of violence, continued, particularly in some rural areas, and that this had increased with discussions about the new constitution. Although, a couple of organisations suggested that recent reports of violence may be exaggerated.

While there were some reports of an improvement in the way the police operated, most organisations stated that the police remained politically biased and that they often ignored, or were complicit in, the persecution of Movement of Democratic Change (MDC) supporters and civil society activists.

All organisations reported that politically motivated violence was rare in most urban centres in Zimbabwe. Bulawayo and Harare were noted as being relatively safe, and that they benefited from higher levels of scrutiny by the media, civil society and international organisations than smaller towns and rural areas. However, rural areas, especially areas that had traditionally voted for the Zimbabwean African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) such as the Mashonaland provinces - Central, East and West - and Manicaland, were noted to be particularly problematic. Matabeleland North and South were however considered to be relatively safe.

While some organisations noted that influential MDC supporters could be at risk, ordinary opposition and MDC supporters were not thought to be at any particular risk.

Non-Government Organisation (NGO) activity

All organisations interviewed reported that they were able to operate relatively freely in most areas of the country - political interference was reported to have decreased since the formation of the Government of National Unity.

Urban areas were reported to be relatively open, with the distribution of aid less open to political manipulation. However, most rural areas were more tightly controlled by ZANU-PF, with politically-appointed district administrators holding a large measure of influence. Rural areas considered by ZANU-PF to be its 'heartlands' were more difficult to access, especially for organisations that distributed food and which were involved in projects that were perceived to

have a political angle. The distribution of medicine and medical care was reported to be relatively free from interference.

Internal relocation

It was reported that there were no legal requirements or restrictions for those wishing to re-settle in other parts of Zimbabwe. While in theory resettlement to any part of the country was possible, in practice, resettlement to rural areas was reported to be difficult, especially for those considered to be opposed to ZANU-PF. However, most organisations stated that relocation to the country's main urban centres posed relatively few problems – the main constraint being economic.

Returnees to Zimbabwe

In addition to interviewing international and national NGOs the mission also spoke to seven Zimbabweans who had previously claimed asylum in the United Kingdom but then had returned to the country in 2009 and 2010. While all seven reported that they had decided not to divulge the fact that they had claimed asylum in the United Kingdom upon arrival in Zimbabwe, none experienced any significant problems on return. All chose to resettle in Bulawayo or Harare.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

1. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND DISTRIBUTION OF AID

a) Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

Summary of transcripts*

- 1.1 The organisations interviewed generally reported that they were able to operate without restriction in most areas of the country. Two sources mentioned the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) as a constraint. However, while urban areas remained relatively open, some rural areas such as Masvingo, Mashonaland East and Central, were difficult to access. One organisation reported that they had been able to overcome some access problems through negotiation with ZANU-PF representatives. A representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross reported that the organisation had experienced “no difficulties” operating in any part of the country but noted that it was aware that other organisations had experienced “interference” in the distribution of aid.

There were some cases of work and meetings being disrupted, threats being made to some NGOs and two lawyers by ZANU-PF officials and/or police, and some cases of harassment through politically motivated prosecutions. The potential for future disruption remained but most organisations reported that instances of interference had decreased since the formation of the GNU.

Several organisations noted that some projects perceived to have a political dimension (such as investigation of violence, post trauma assessment and community empowerment) were more difficult to operate than others (such as health care), and they faced some opposition from ZANU-PF appointed district administrators.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocuters in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocuters however users are advised to read the transcripts in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Transcript notes

The transcripts are arranged in no particular order.

- 1.2 An anonymous organisation noted:

“We are able to operate relatively freely at the moment but in effect, the situation has not changed as the potential still exists for harassment. In effect the organisation produces a newspaper for its Public Information Rights Forum members, which qualifies it to be exempt from the restrictive conditions of the [Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act] AIPPA media law. But this does not eliminate the potential for the Government to close down the paper – and the organization – on the false and arbitrary grounds of allegedly breaking the media law. There is currently no clarity as to the rule of law thus people do not know if they are safe or not. A number of laws exist to undermine business activity and civil society. ZANU – PF continues to control the security and justice sectors.” [2a]

- 1.3 The Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights (ZADHR) noted:

“Freedom depends on the area and the project. Less politically sensitive projects, for instance training on HIV care, are not restricted or monitored in any areas. However,

more sensitive projects, like the current Post Trauma needs assessment, have faced opposition in some areas from local administrators. This has happened particularly in Masvingo and Mashonaland East and Central where focus groups have met with resistance from the District Administrator. This project is seeking to establish the impact of the last eight years of violence and had originally planned to take samples of healthcare professionals from around Zimbabwe. However, resistance has meant that only certain areas could be visited; areas with high levels of Zanu PF control were more restrictive than others.

“Masvingo and Mashonaland East and Central have been particularly difficult to access in order to conduct surveys and local administrators have monitored meetings in these areas, although there has been no action taken by the authorities in these areas. Some health professionals asked to take part in the focus groups and meetings have been warned not to attend by local authorities in Mashonaland East and Central, and this has sometimes resulted in lower attendance. However, ZADHR is not aware of any reprisals for those who attended despite warnings.

“An amenable local administrator or chief will offer help.” [5a]

1.4 The Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) noted:

“We have been able to work fairly normally, some activities have invited interference in the form of monitoring meetings, however there have been no disruptions. There has been some interference from state agents trying to find out about our activities but that has not really affected operations. On a general level, the government's NGO bill continues to be a threat as the possibility of it being reintroduced by Parliament remains and the government's provincial policies in relation to the work of humanitarian and human rights NGOs can cause some difficulties.

“Lawyers have been arrested in 2009 but not 2010. There was a physical threat against a ZLHR Project lawyer working in Mutare in 2010. The lawyer was forced to leave Mutare for a few days but returned for the court hearing. In May 2010, a lawyer working to free a [Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe] GALZ activist was threatened with arrest in Harare Central police station and similar threats have been issued from time to time. Malicious prosecutions of lawyers representing human rights defenders continue, as lawyers are often associated with the cause of their client/s. This presents some challenges in defending human rights defenders and providing legal support services.” [6a]

1.5 The Counselling Services Unit noted:

“The organisation is currently able to operate freely with no constraints on its activities.” [7a]

1.6 The International Committee of the Red Cross noted:

“We face currently no difficulty operating wherever we choose in the country and were also not touched by the 2008 ban that affected other international organisations and the NGOs: As indicated we have been here off and on since 1959 and constantly since 75. In one way or another we have met many of those who are today in power and they have benefited from our work. As a result we are probably slightly seen less as irritating, interfering outsiders.

“There is no doubt that on the economic level the situation has improved considerably since the formation of the GNU. Even one year ago it was still difficult to buy goods in supermarkets in some areas. Things are generally better now but there is still not enough money in the economy and the situation for many is far from comfortable. Food production is much higher now than it was in two years ago although problems with the harvest mean this year’s will be lower. This may be offset to some extent by the fact that the government has more money to import food from neighbours, though still not enough and 1.7million [people] are expected to need food aid.

“There are sporadic but regularly recurrent reports of interference by authorities at local or provincial level in the aid attribution process: Sometimes these are clearly attempts to make sure the aid gets to the 'politically correct' beneficiaries as seen by the concerned authority. At other times it may be linked to traditional authorities (chiefs) feeling their authority is being undermined by NGOs not including their advice or following their direction. Our own relief operations in 2008 and 2009 have not been affected by this.” [8a]

1.7 The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum noted:

“There are currently few restrictions on the Forum’s ability to operate beyond those legal restrictions on NGO activity which remain in place. Under this, the police still from time to time use [Public Order and Security Act] POSA to insist that the Forum obtains police permission for its meetings even though they are not political meetings.

“The Forum has twice this year had occasions when meetings have been disrupted by local ZANU-PF officials even though they had obtained police permission to hold the meetings and there were uniformed police officers present. The police officers refused to intervene and stop the ZANU-PF officials terminating the meetings.” [9a]

1.8 An organisation that asked to remain anonymous noted:

“The organisation could operate freely throughout Zimbabwe, and the environment had improved over the last 18 months, although much of the improvement was in the first year following the GNU. It is generally able to interact freely with the Government of Zimbabwe, NGOs, civil society, opposition politicians etc. This organisation keeps a low profile in order to better serve the people of Zimbabwe and avoid putting the beneficiary population at risk.

“There are still some constraints on operations. Community based planning projects are seen as mobilising the community and therefore as a political action. Before the GNU, the projects would not have been possible. Now, however, the Zimbabwean authorities are now more willing and even pro-active in allowing people to participate; although in some cases government officials still see the projects as taking power from the government and allowing the population to develop ideas that may counter government policies or initiatives.

“There are sometimes directives from local officials to stop working; however, this is in limited cases, and most of the time, the organisation can overcome this through negotiation. There are still districts where access is not granted, but these are few and access constraints typically affect individual communities or small geographical areas. Some quarters of the GNU, particularly ZANU-PF aligned elements, speculate that the organisation (and many other humanitarian actors) is biased towards MDC; however, the organisation is keen to maintain a reputation for neutrality.” [10a]

1.9 An International NGO which asked to remain anonymous noted:

“The Source organisation is able to operate freely in respect of some aspects of its operations but in relation to work with IDPs there are some constraints on physical aspects to some areas. These are often overcome through local explanation and negotiation but concerns remain and the situation is expected to get worse as the next elections approach. The organisation is already working on contingency plans in an attempt to be able to maintain its operations but has significant doubts about how conducive the environment will remain.” [11a]

1.10 The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe noted:

“The Source is able to carry out its programmes throughout the country. However, the political environment has noticeably deterred some people from participating, especially in rural areas because they fear that, although the organisation is not political and has members from both sides of the political divide, they will face awkward questioning about why they attended. The source explained that every ward in Zimbabwe has a Ward Co-ordinator who is financed by ZANU-PF and who will report attendance, and meetings are also routinely attended by [Central Intelligence Organisation] CIO officers who again inhibit attendance. This is much less of a problem in towns and cities because people are generally less fearful and more enlightened.” [12a]

1.11 The Bulawayo Agenda noted:

“The source stated that they are able to carry out almost all of their normal activities, and the instances of activities being interfered with have decreased since the GNU was formed. The organisation typically holds three meetings per month in each of 14 districts. This includes leadership forums, where government departments and civil society can collaborate in order to improve the local area and increase development. A meeting was stopped in Bulawayo in 2010. There have been two meetings stopped in Matabeleland north in 2010; one was prevented from taking place and the other was stopped during the meeting. The organisers of the meetings were arrested. One community-based organiser was held in custody for four days because the police stated that they did not have clearance for the meeting to take place, even though that was not true. The same organiser was arrested on another occasion in Lupare, with another organiser being arrested in Victoria Falls. There have been no arrests of activists or organisers in Bulawayo since the formation of the GNU.

“The source believed that they were targeted because they are an NGO, not because of the topics they discussed.

“Meetings were suspended before the World Cup because police personnel were missing.

“The organisation was recently called to a police station and questioned on their sources of information. They were then told that they should not be bringing things to public attention if they damage the reputation of Zimbabwe.” [13a]

1.12 The Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association noted:

“There have been three or four cases this month where the police have stopped the organisation from holding a meeting by refusing to issue a permit, stating that because of the Constitution process, only political parties were allowed to hold meetings.

“When meetings have gone ahead, members of a different Residents’ Association in Bulawayo, which is aligned with Zanu PF, have attended and disrupted the meeting. When police were asked to attend, they instead sympathised with those disrupting the meeting, stating that the meeting was too noisy and should be stopped.” [14a]

1.13 A faith based organisation which asked to remain anonymous noted:

“[To the question are you able to operate freely.] To a degree, although this depends on the area. The organisation has no problems working in Matabeleland and the Midlands, but working in Mashonaland East and Central is made problematic by ZANU-PF. District Administrators appointed by ZANU-PF control these areas along with the local CIO offices and the police and at times prevent the organisations from holding meetings. Marondera and Murirwa are places the organisation cannot access. The local police pastor in Marondera refused to organise a meeting as he was too afraid. Small meetings in Masvingo (Gutu) have taken place but been tense. S.24(d) of POSA states that the requirement to register an intention to hold a public meeting does not apply to religious organisations but if the police hear about intended meetings, then intimidation takes place beforehand to prevent people from attending. In May and June of this year the organisation carried out 6 of 10 intended meetings.” [15a]

1.14 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“[To the question of whether it was able to operate freely.] To an extent. We can get into the community but not as freely as we would like. There are still a lot of constraints.” [1a]

1.15 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“[To the question of whether it was able to operate freely.] Yes, although there have been a certain amount of problems for our partners. We have not had any issues with the authorities, although before the 2008 elections we were visited by the police Internal Security Section (PISI). The visit came to nothing.” [3a]

1.16 An organisation that asked to remain anonymous noted:

“The Source organisation is generally able to operate freely but over the past year it has been prevented from accessing the diamond fields. Elsewhere, access is surprisingly good. The organisation operates a substantial programme spread across the country.” [16a]

1.17 Radio Dialogue noted:

“The organisation is able to operate without too much interference, however they have been 'warned off' calling for regime change. They also find it difficult to get official comments as they are viewed as a pirate radio station.” [25a]

If not, what constraints are placed on your organisation?

1.18 An anonymous organisation noted:

“There are currently no physical constraints. But there have been and continue to be threats from the police. The police and CIO had in the past visited our offices but have not done so since the last elections. Two members of staff and 14 participants of an outreach meeting in Binga were detained for four days in May 2008. Lawyers attended and those arbitrarily detained were eventually released without charge. MMPZ recently conducted an outreach in Mutare involving 30 local participants, which was also attended by 5 plainclothes policemen. A number of the participants were afraid and did not participate as a result. However, the outreach was not prevented from taking place by the police. Earlier this year (2010) an outreach session was stopped by the local police. Three weeks before four or five plainclothes policemen and intelligence officers also attended an outreach session in Nyika.” [2a]

1.19 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“[To the question of whether there were constraints.] [Public Order and Security Act] POSA for example. We also have to clear meetings with the authorities and go through local authorities as well such as Chiefs and Headmen. We have though managed to establish a good relationship with local people.” [1a]

1.20 Radio Dialogue noted:

“Some journalists have been allowed access to prisons, and have been given some more freedom, however POSA is still applied and it is still illegal to speak badly about the President, which means people are uncertain about speaking out if they do not know who is around them. People in urban areas have less fear about speaking openly than those in rural areas. A collection of NGOs are currently looking at the constitution in focus groups with communities.” [25a]

Who/what is responsible for these constraints and how does it affect your work?

1.21 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“See above [paragraph 1.19].” [1a]

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

b) Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

Summary of transcripts*

1.22 Generally, aid was accessible to the population. One source considered that while aid organisations were able to operate more freely immediately after the formation of the

GNU, the environment had become “more restrictive of late”. Two sources stated that the aid situation had improved. Three organisations considered that the distribution of aid (two specifying food aid) was politicised, though one of these sources also stated that it had experienced “limited political interference” in its own provision of aid. A major NGO (which asked to remain anonymous) noted that the provisions made for future aid were insufficient; other organisations observed that aid would need to continue for some time to come.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the transcripts in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Transcript notes

The transcripts are arranged in no particular order.

1.23 The Counselling Services Unit noted:

“Aid organisations were able to operate much more freely immediately after the formation of the Government of National Unity. But the environment has become more restrictive of late, particularly in the rural areas. Local Chiefs are increasingly regaining control of their areas. Everything has to be done through local ZANU-PF structures who will use lists to manage the distribution of aid.” [7a]

1.24 An International NGO who asked to remain anonymous noted:

“The Source considers that the provisions made for future aid are insufficient across the board.” [11a]

1.25 The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe noted:

“Availability of food will improve in the immediate future as a harvest is due. However this is unlikely to last and aid will continue to be needed.” [12a]

1.26 The Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association noted:

“The situation has improved.” [14a]

1.27 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association, noted:

“We are not an aid organisation so I am unable to comment specifically but it is clear that there is room for improvement. People are still starving in some areas. Distribution of food aid is still used as a political tool by Chiefs and Headmen.” [1a]

1.28 An organisation that asked to remain anonymous noted:

“The aid situation is certainly better now than it was in 2008/2009, although the formation of the GNU is not the best baseline as there were particular challenges around that time because of serious restrictions on the operations of NGOs.

“The population is generally able to access aid now. There are still major shortfalls in the amount of aid but that is generally down to lack of resources rather than any deliberate

attempts to deprive recipients. Food aid is the most politicised aid and it is not only ZANU-PF that is guilty of that. The Source organisation noted there was limited political interference in the aid it provides.” [16a]

Is aid getting to those most in need of it?

1.29 An anonymous organisation noted:

“As long as aid gets to NGO’s and International Organisations then it stands a better chance of getting to the people who need it. Much still depends on the allegiance of the local authorities in terms of allocation of some food aid.” [2a]

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

C) Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

Summary of transcripts*

1.30 A number of organisations reported that they were aware of some problems because of political discrimination or political interference in the distribution of aid. Almost all sources considered urban areas better than rural. Two sources identified the Mashonaland provinces (Central, East and West) and Manicaland as being problematic. One source stated that both ZANU-PF and the MDC in areas of under their control would try to restrict access to aid to the supporters of the other party. One organisation stated it was not aware of any political discrimination in the delivery of aid, while two others reported that aid agencies operated freely and did not allow aid distribution to be controlled by political bias respectively.

An anonymous Zimbabwean organisation stated considered that perceived or actual political affiliation “often” affected receipt of aid; an individual would have to prove they were an active ZANU-PF supporter. The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum observed that it had received reports of local individuals seeking to politicise aid distribution but this did not appear to be systematic and politicisation was “not really a problem”.

Access to medical assistance was less prone to “politicisation” than aid generally (but the cost of treatment prevented access for many).

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the transcripts in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Transcript notes

The transcripts are arranged in no particular order.

1.31 An anonymous organisation noted:

“There have been reports of discrimination but the Agencies have been even handed with aid distribution. However, even they can be influenced at a local level by local authorities.” [2a]

1.32 The Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights noted:

“The distribution of aid appears to have improved since 2008, although there is still interference from local authorities who attempt to influence NGOs to distribute aid according to their lists. There is some resistance from NGOs, but the source was unclear as to how successful that was. The local authority list is made on political grounds, rather than a needs assessment.” [5a]

1.33 The Counselling Services Unit noted:

“There are regional variations in the extent to which this [political bias] interferes with the distribution of aid. Mashonaland Central and East are ‘dreadful’. Manicaland and Mashonaland West are ‘difficult’, the latter because of a leadership struggle within ZANU-PF. Political manipulation of aid is not however limited to one side and in areas which it has more control the MDC will also try to restrict access to aid for those who are not supporters. Access to educational support for orphans has been limited for non-ZANU orphans.

“The situation in urban areas is different. Probably owing to the concentration of population which makes service delivery easier, and the fact that need may be less need for aid distribution because most urban people have some means of getting income (although even to achieve as e.g. a street vendor selling tomatoes, it is often necessary to have a ZANU-PF membership card). There is constant harassment of the informal sector, and in the last week there has been destruction of vendors property in Manicaland and forced displacement of homeless people again in Harare. Their informal shacks were torched by police this week and they were arrested (over 150 people).

“Much politicisation of services is at a strategic level rather than in the delivery of frontline services. So for example, senior officials or politicians in ministries may block projects for political reasons. There is also corruption and there appear to be increasing incidences of low level officials blocking projects to extract bribes.

“Not all shortcomings in service are down to politicisation but rather to lack of capacity – there simply are not enough professionals with the necessary skills to implement projects. An example was given of a US\$100 million grant to a ministry of which only US\$20 million has been spent because there was not the professional capacity to implement more. The great difficulty is that until the infrastructure improves sufficiently so that there are enough good schools and adequate healthcare, the professionals who have left Zimbabwe to pursue careers elsewhere will not be attracted back. In Harare the infrastructure is now improved so that e.g. electricity supplies are much more reliable and there is intermittent municipal water, but there is little improvement in smaller urban and rural areas.” [7a]

1.34 An organisation that asked to remain anonymous noted:

“The organisation was not aware of political discrimination in delivery of aid, and noted that in cities, aid is increasingly delivered not to individuals, but to organisation such as hospitals and schools, making discrimination against individuals more difficult. The

organisation delivers aid according to need and does not differentiate depending on political opinion. The source noted that aid organisations all have their own methodologies for prioritising recipients of aid.” [10a]

1.35 An International NGO which asked to remain anonymous noted:

“The Source further considers that those provinces which were ‘hotspots’ of political violence in 2008 to continue to be problematic. In 2009 it had to suspend operations for a time in Mashonaland Central. Operations only resumed in May 2010, and even then, ‘cautiously’, and the situation remains tense.

“The Government of Zimbabwe’s aid distribution office has to be involved in the whole aid distribution process and may sometimes be present at aid distribution operations. The organisations distributing the aid often prefer this level of involvement because it reduces the chances that the aid organisations themselves will be accused of politically motivated discrimination in the distribution of aid. But the downside that this has resulted in some political interference in the distribution of aid, notably in Mashonaland Central and East and Manicaland.

“The Source also pointed to a pilot initiative in Mashonaland Central which has seen the Government of Zimbabwe seeking to link the provision of food aid through the World Food Programme to ‘voluntary’ work in the community. The GoZ has sought to justify this on the grounds that it reduces the risk of culture of dependency developing. However, the Source is greatly concerned that in the hands of government that is inclined to do so, it is potentially a tool of manipulation of aid.” [11a]

1.36 The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe noted:

“At the moment aid providers are operating freely but are subject to close monitoring by the govt aid department and the CIO.

“The Source identified a shortfall in aid provision in urban areas and it has been suggested in some quarters that the GoZ has knowingly allowed an ‘urban famine’ to develop.

“In Mutare, the sister organisation Caritas Zimbabwe through Mutare Diocese is funded by a Netherlands based NGO Cordaid where participants are given fertiliser and seeds to help them grow their own food and be self-sufficient, with enough food left to sell. Participants are also given an ATM-style card with \$30 in order to buy food while they wait for the harvest. The Government has requested that this project implementation format be changed to suit government policy, that people should do community work before they can be given access to food aid.” [12a]

1.37 The Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association noted:

“In October 2009, the source saw people in Zanu PF t shirts giving food aid to Zanu PF members, but has not other specific examples of political bias in food aid distribution.

“The local governor in Bulawayo is part of Zanu PF, and prioritises Zanu PF members for special aid projects, such as giving out cheques for small business start-ups. Conversely, the Local Authority, which is part of MDC, is responsible for giving out food

aid by NGOs, and this is now evenly distributed amongst all who need it, and is not dependent on any political affiliation.

“Medical services are governed by hospitals, and medical help is given to everybody equally, with no preference given depending on political affiliation.” [14a]

1.38 A major international humanitarian organisation that asked to remain anonymous noted:

“There are shortfalls in services everywhere, and some areas might have better provision of one form of aid but worse of another, making it difficult to generalise about which parts of the country are worse than others . It is certainly the case that rural areas are generally worse than urban areas, but such has been the deterioration in infrastructure that the urban areas are certainly not immune, as evidenced by the cholera outbreaks in all major urban centres.” [16a]

1.39 The Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe noted:

“It is difficult for gay men to access health services including STI and HIV/AIDs treatment in public health facilities. This is believed to be because the service providers are intimidated by the attitudes of the President to homosexuality. This is not a problem for middle class gay men as the middle classes generally use private healthcare where there is no such discrimination.” [4a]

Does a person’s actual or perceived political affiliation result in discrimination in the receipt of aid?

1.40 An anonymous organisation noted:

“It often does. In Z[ANU]-JPF areas to ensure aid is supplied it is not sufficient simply to prove that a person is not an MDC supporter but that they also demonstrate that they are an active ZANU – PF supporter.” [2a]

1.41 The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum noted:

“The forum does not work directly in this area and therefore cannot give expert opinion except to the extent that the reports it receives can illustrate. There was a time when it was very difficult for many people to access aid. Politicisation was a major problem, with the ZANU-PF leadership in many areas insisting that people had to show a party card to access aid. The situation is very different now and the Forum is not aware of any humanitarian organisation involved in aid distribution that allows food distribution to be controlled on a political basis. All now have effective mechanisms in place to prevent this, which is a remarkable transition.

“Reports from one Forum member organisation suggest that there have been a few incidents of local individuals seeking to politicise aid distribution but this does not appear to be systematic and politicisation is not really a problem at the moment.” [9a]

Has there been any political manipulation of aid – either NGO or state provision?

1.42 An anonymous organisation noted:

“In the case of manipulation in favour of ZANU-PF, it appears to have been influenced from the highest level and implemented at the local level where local government structures are still mainly under the control of Z[ANU-]PF.” [2a]

1.43 The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum noted:

“There have been major improvements in the health sector. People are getting drugs, many provided by humanitarian organisations. However, the cost of healthcare even in public hospitals puts it beyond the financial reach of many.

“There is some politicisation in healthcare provision. If a patient is a victim of a human rights violation they cannot get treatment without a police report, which the police will often decline to provide, thus effectively barring treatment in public hospitals. In rural areas the senior people in charge of healthcare facilities will usually be controlled by ZANU-PF supporters and there is concern that this may lead to denial of treatment for those who are known to be MDC supporters. However the Forum has received no reports of this happening and it is likely to apply only to those who have a known profile as a political or human rights activists.

“In the major cities, there is no political discrimination in the provision of healthcare and in fact most of the healthcare workers would probably be more inclined to discriminate against ZANU-PF supporters, but it doesn’t happen, possibly because of higher literacy rates and political awareness.

“The Source also explained that ‘high profile’ will mean different things in urban and rural areas. In the latter a Ward Chairperson would be a high profile figure but in the cities such a person would be a nobody.” [9a]

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

2. THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

a) What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

Summary of transcripts*

2.1 Most organisations interviewed reported that there had been an opening-up of political space since the formation of the Government of National Unity in February 2009, this was particularly the case in urban areas. An anonymous organisation noted that urban areas, such as Harare and Bulawayo, were more politically open; however, key marginal constituencies which were “strongly” contested in 2008 election were described as political “battlegrounds”.

Uncertainty about the future, and doubts about the sustainability of the current political situation were a concern. As a result, there were fears that the current situation may deteriorate ahead of the next elections (sources predicted elections may take place in the next few months and as late as 2012). A number of organisations noted that there had been reports of intimidation and violence as part of the constitutional outreach process (COPAC).

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocuters in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocuters however users are advised to read the transcripts in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Transcript notes

The transcripts are arranged in no particular order.

2.2 An anonymous organisation noted:

“There is now less of a threat and the current environment is more difficult for ZANU-PF to operate in. However, as the GNU becomes older, Z[ANU-]PF is becoming more and more emboldened. As Z[ANU-]PF becomes more confident and stronger, it is beginning to revert back to the situation before the GNU was formed. There is now more overt activity in contravention of the spirit of the GNU, such as ZPF mobilisation of supporters, corruption of the COPAC process etc. Harassment of MDC supporters continues. The potential still exists for a reversion to previous violence. The elections of 2005 for example were only less violent due to the memory of the event of 2002.” [2a]

2.3 The Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights noted:

“Since 2008, there has been some opening of restricted space in most areas of Zimbabwe. Some aid agencies feel limited by local interference, but are still able to travel with less restrictions than in 2008. Local authorities will check on the organisation if they think their operation is going ‘too well’. There has been a limited change in the media – there are now two daily newspapers available but there is still a state owned monopoly of broadcast media with a Zanu PF bias which sometimes bordered on hate speech.” [5a]

2.4 The Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights noted:

“It has been a variable situation. When the government is running smoothly, civil society has been left alone but at times of tensions within the government there has been increased targeting of civil society and political figures. After the GNU formed there were less overt attacks, however following MDC disengagement there were attempted abductions on civil society activists and human rights defenders were imprisoned.

“With the advent of the constitutional outreach programme, led by Parliament, violence has surfaced again in a number of provinces. Meetings regarding the Constitution Outreach have had to be cancelled in some areas due to intimidation, disruptions and monitoring – the pattern for this follows that of the general violence. There have also been cases of post-outreach meeting retribution against those community members who have expressed individual opinions in the meetings.” [6a]

2.5 The Counselling Services Unit noted:

“ZANU-PF is currently fighting very hard to gain political space and is using the Constitution Outreach Programme process to test that space and its structures. There is increasing militarization of rural areas and the Youth Militias that were established in bases in such areas ahead of the 2008 elections remain on the government payroll. There is increasing incidence of senior soldiers being deployed to rural areas out of

uniform to further bolster ZANU-PF control. There is not however a lot of popular support for ZANU-PF.

“Real power lies with the senior military (JOC), with Robert Mugabe as the political front. The military are very aware of the regional pressure to maintain a civilian government, but have developed a powerful structure of control of the political party. At present, Robert Mugabe retains control over all critical decisions, but If one wants to know what is happening in the political sphere one should watch the Joint Operational Command (JOC).

“The Source expects ZANU-PF to call a snap election in the coming months – when precisely will be clearer after the August 2010 SADC summit and again it will be the JOC that calls the shots. The Source considers that both ZANU-PF and the military are desperate for political legitimacy. They are also very aware of the intense regional pressures to form a civilian government and are keen to rebuild their reputation in the region and with the west, not least because they feel that the relationship with China is not going to be a comfortable one. Interestingly the SADC summit delivered another 30 day deadline, with no defined commencement date, and there is very little evidence of any compliance with resolution of the 3 toxic or 24 administrative issues outstanding. (We hear that the political life of Zuma may be cut short in the near future).

“They will therefore seek to rely as far as possible on measures short of large-scale political violence in the election campaign and believe that they can achieve a clear majority without needing to resort to large-scale violence. Instead they will seek to exploit the deep divisions in the MDC, which is close to fracturing into two distinct factions, led by Makoni and Biti, with the former keeping Tsvangirai as a front. Each faction already has its own nationwide political machine but a fracture along these lines would nonetheless be disastrous for MDC’s prospects in the election. Neither have regional powers been impressed by MDC’s performance and in particular its failure to reach out and form regional alliances, which will increase ZANU-PF’s confidence that a legitimately elected ZANU-PF government would be acceptable.

“A further factor will be that ZANU-PF were afraid after the 2008 election violence that they were going to be indicted by the International Criminal Court and will want at all costs to avoid increasing that risk. There will still be intimidation, as already seen in respect of the COPAC process, but they will try to suppress large-scale pre-and post election political violence, although that will remain in their armoury if it looks like they are going to lose the election.

“If ZANU-PF does achieve a legitimate election victory the Source expects that the political space in Zimbabwe will open up considerably and there will be much less pressure on political activists.” [7a]

2.6 An organisation that asked to remain anonymous noted:

“People in Zimbabwe are tentative about the current peace and are aware that it is fragile. There is some optimism, but the uncertainty about the future is evident in the population. It is believed that MDC have little power within the government and there is variable freedom of expression, although in MDC strongholds, it is more open. There was uncertainty about the timing of the next elections. The police interfere less with political action, however, war veterans sometimes interrupt meetings about the constitution. There is intimidation by some war veterans and people allied with Zanu PF

in some areas which limits expression and participation. In rural areas there is some fear of reprisal for speaking against Zanu PF. People can talk about politics more freely than previously but are still inhibited by memories of past persecution.” [10a]

2.7 The International Committee of the Red Cross noted:

“The political situation is not really going anywhere at the moment and no-one knows where it will end up. There is some surprise that the GNU is still holding together but initial deep pessimism has proved to be unfounded and this can mainly be attributed to a very positive attitude from those in MDC and Zanu PF who wish to move the country forward. The Source expects a very difficult time when the GNU ends as it must, either because of elections or the death of the President, without whom it cannot survive. The worst case scenario, but a very possible one, is that Mugabe dies suddenly and the military attempts to seize power. If that happened they would probably succeed in the short term – there is little to stop them domestically – but they would eventually be ended by regional pressure from the SADC.

“It is the Source’s opinion that the elections will probably not take place before 2012 for a variety of mostly practical reasons including both main parties’ lack of resources to fund a campaign and the need to get the constitutional referendum out of the way.” [8a]

2.8 An International NGO which asked to remain anonymous noted:

“The situation now is more permissive but the Source doubts how sustainable this is and is very concerned that the next elections will see a return to the previous more restrictive state of affairs.” [11a]

2.9 The Bulawayo Agenda noted:

“There has been a slight improvement in freedom of expression since the GNU was formed, however people do not trust people they do not know enough to openly discuss politics.

“The organisation has been collecting information for the COPAC process and has found that people are sometimes reluctant to express their views openly in case of reprisals. The organisation attempts to convince people that they are free to discuss whatever they want, however the fear is deeply ingrained and there can be no guarantees that people are safe. However, the organisation is not aware of any recent arrests for speaking against the government.” [13a]

2.10 The Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association noted:

“The organisation has worked with all political parties for consultation and public information since its formation in 2007. There is a concern that Zanu PF are determined to win the next election and there is uncertainty and unease over the methods they will employ.” [14a]

2.11 A faith based organisation which asked to remain anonymous noted:

“There has been a notable difference. Post election there was a lot of violence. That decreased but there appears to be a resurgence that has started with the COPAC

process. There has been intimidation in parts of Masvingo, Gut and Bikita. There have been tensions around former commercial farms where people have been resettled.” [15a]

2.12 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“There has been an improvement in terms of the movement of people and freedom of association. There is better access to food, fuel etc. Dollarisation has stabilised the economy. But there is a lot that still needs to be improved. The main protagonists in the GNU, especially ZANU-PF, have not fulfilled many parts of the Global Political Agreement (GPA). ZANU-PF still maintains control over parts of the Government, and the army and police. The judiciary remains compromised and the problem of Tomana [Attorney-General Johannes Tomana] has not been solved. Mugabe continues to make appointments unilaterally without reference to the GNU. There are now a number of commissions in place, such as the anti-corruption commission, the election commission and the Zimbabwe Media Commission but their effect has been limited. The Zimbabwe Media Commission for example has not done anything to free up the electronic media. A recent example would be the use of ZANU-PF jingles on the radio. Radio is still used as a propaganda tool by ZANU-PF.” [1a]

2.13 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“I do not believe that ZANU-PF in any way believes in the Government of National Unity (GNU). The GNU simply serves to give the party some breathing space to prepare for the next elections. It is effectively an unimplementable agreement. However, inflation has stopped the economy has now stabilised but this has left the poor who worked in the informal sector and cross border trade in a worse situation with regards to a dollar economy. There have therefore been some good and bad consequences.” [3a]

2.14 A major international humanitarian organisation noted:

“Generally the source believes that the political space has opened up to allow people to discuss political issues more freely. However, an increase in incidents of violence in connection with the constitutional outreach programme has complicated the picture.” [16a]

Is the local political environment freer or more restricted since the formation of the GNU?

2.15 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association, noted:

“The rural areas are still heavily politicised. ZANU-PF continue to use the army, police, youth militia and war veterans to intimidate. The constitution making process has been used by ZANU-PF to trigger violence in the communities. The patience of the Zimbabwean people appears though to be reaching an end. Zimrights recently published a document called “Article 7: values for healing”. We thought people would have been afraid to voice an opinion, but people were happy to speak direct to a video camera about the issues – they were clearly not afraid.” [1a]

2.16 The Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ) noted:

“In the early days of the GNU a lot of political space opened up for GALZ and they enjoyed good access to senior politicians. They feel, however, that the space is closing down again and they no longer enjoy such good access. They believe this is partly due to

the constitutional process but also that the MDC seems less interested in human rights than they were before the GNU formation.” [4a]

Have supporters of all political parties been able to gather or protest without interference? What type of interference? Who?

2.17 An anonymous organisation noted:

“The police recently refused the MDC-T to hold a rally in Hwange recently, but the party, led by the country’s Prime Minister, Morgan Tsvangirai, held the rally anyway and there was no interference. Although some forms of media reported this, it was not covered in the state media. Therefore a proportion of the population are unaware of these issues. However, other public events organized by less high profile political figures and civic activist organizations have been disrupted or prevented from going ahead by the police. A lack of clear MDC media strategy to advertise such issues and the party’s failure to assert itself as an equal partner in the coalition government is leading to a more cynical view towards the GNU – and the MDC.” [2a]

2.18 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“In the rural areas people have not been turning up to the COPAC meetings simply because they don’t want to hear from or about ZANU-PF any more. People don’t want to be associated with them any more.” [1a]

2.19 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“This has been a honeymoon period. Now the Constitution making process has begun, the political space is closing down dramatically. There are increasing reports of political violence and intimidation. RAU is currently researching communities where militia bases exist and looking at Northern Zimbabwe where the violence was worse in 2008. We are looking at what was in place in 2008 where there were multiple bases which explicitly targeted MDC and non-participating voters. There is evidence that the Government has placed “environment officers”, who are ex-militia members, in schools to ensure co-operation. Land redistribution has resulted in 127,000 families resettled. They are controlled as ZANU-PF supporters through the allocation of land without land rights. They can therefore be evicted at any time, and hence owe allegiance to ZANU-PF.” [3a]

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more politically open?

2.20 An anonymous organisation noted:

“Harare is more politically open than the rural areas. Areas that were strongly contested during the last election and where majorities are slim are still battlegrounds in political terms. For example, Bindura, which is an ex ZANUP-PF stronghold, now MDC, and where MDC members have been charged with offences, beaten and locked up as part of a campaign of intimidation. Buhera is another example. ZANUP-PF is also now fighting back in urban areas where the MDC has the majority, by undermining MDC councils. The fact that the MDC have to be seen to answerable gives ZPF an advantage.” [2a]

2.21 The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum noted:

“The political space has not really opened up at all at the local level. People cannot speak freely about political matters and there have been instances of people in Combis being arrested after being overheard doing so. This is more of a problem in rural areas but applies to some extent anywhere. The space has opened up to some extent for civil society, who can now access previously out of bounds areas although some remain problematic, for example Mutoko and Chiwasha.” [9a]

2.22 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“The urban areas are more politically open.” [1a]

2.23 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“In the last voter survey conducted by RAU in November 2009, 9% said they would vote ZANU-PF and 51% for MDC.” [3a]

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

3. POLITICAL VIOLENCE

a) Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

Summary of transcripts*

3.1 All the organisations interviewed noted that political violence or the threat of violence continued, though levels of violence were (relatively) low and less widespread (when compared to peaks, such as during elections). Most current violence was reported to have taken the form of “verbal violence” or “threatening behaviour” and was often connected to the constitutional outreach programme (COPAC). The Counselling Services Unit (CSU) stated that there had been relatively little “structural violence” in 2010 while the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum stated that the violence was not systematic. A representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross noted that a lack of reliable information made it difficult to gauge actual levels of violence and added that reports of violence may have been overstated. A major NGO stated that it was not aware of widespread violence and the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (Zimbabwe) (CCJPZ) observed that there was little political violence but both added that this might be because people feared further violence. The CCJPZ noted that violence was less in towns/cities, though not actually stated, it is presumed it meant than the countryside.

Some organisations stated that the current lower levels of violence were part of a pattern of peaks and troughs which corresponded to elections and intervening periods. A number of organisations considered that there was potential for future violence orchestrated by the ZANU-PF.

There were a number of views expressed about the profile of those at risk of violence. The Counselling Services Unit stated that violence was targeted at those with a political profile, not necessarily of a high level, but there would no interest in MDC supporters who were not active. An international NGO considered risk depended on the standing of the individual in society in addition to political activity. In rural areas those considered influential (such as teachers, business people and professionals) might be at risk even

for relatively low level political activity. The Bulawayo Agenda reported that ordinary people were not threatened but there had been some threats made against “activists”. The Research Advocacy Unit listed those it considered at risk included MDC activists, those suspected of being MDC members and members of NGOs. A couple of organisations stated that individuals who failed to identify with a political party were viewed with suspicion.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocuters in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocuters however users are advised to read the transcripts in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Transcript notes

The transcripts are arranged in no particular order.

3.2 An anonymous organisation noted:

“Political violence is constantly present in all parts of the country. Only this week media reports indicate a large increase in the number of political violence incidents. 18 new incidents were reported this week, with 11 of those connected with COPAC’s outreach activities. The Government has only reported 3, none in relation to the COPAC outreach.” [2a]

3.3 The Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights noted:

“There has been no overall change in political violence in the last eight years, and fluctuating levels have followed the same pattern of increase around elections, with a dip in the years between. The current lower levels of violence are normal for a time between elections, and although they are much lower than in 2008, this is to be expected. Violence is at a low level but is still occurring, with a high level of verbal violence and intimidation directed towards known political activists, for instance party secretaries. However, there has also been some intimidation of workshop participants (as discussed earlier [see paragraph 1.3 for example]) and this does not seem to have a political basis – those without a political profile can be also threatened for their links to the organisation.

“There are reports that preparations are taking place for upcoming elections, although there is no indication of a date being set by the GNU. The organisation has heard that ‘bases’ are being set up in a similar way to those set up in 2008.” [5a]

3.4 The Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights noted:

“The constitution outreach programme has led to an increase in violence, although this mostly takes the form of verbal violence, intimidation and threatening behaviour. However, actual violence may follow for those who speak out at meetings.

“Due to the continued failure by the police and prosecutorial authorities to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of electoral-related violence and other human rights violations, the culture of impunity remains entrenched and some citizens resort to self-help in desperation. MDC members who attempt to reclaim property taken in 2008 face being victimised through the use of malicious arrests and prosecution for ‘extortion’ or ‘theft’.

“Those who are more politically active are more likely to be attacked, for example MDC councillors or people who have positions in MDC structures, however the nature of violence depends on the area and the perpetrator of the violence.

“The violence is mostly in the form of threats claiming that violence in 2008 will be surpassed.” [6a]

3.5 The Counselling Services Unit noted:

“Much of the political violence that has been recorded this year is ‘baseline’ violence, for example pub brawls between competing factions. There have also been several incidents of soldiers ‘getting out of line’ and attacking people. In every such case the soldiers concerned have been disciplined. There has been relatively little structural violence this year i.e. systematic violence inspired or orchestrated by the higher echelons of ZANU-PF.

“Apart from incidents such as bar-room brawls, political violence is carefully targeted against those who have some sort of political profile. Not necessarily particularly high level, but perhaps Ward representatives or organisers, or local party officials. Only those who are on ZANU-PF or CIO lists will be targeted and they would not be interested in people who are merely MDC supporters who are not active in some way. That has always been the case, stretching back to 2002. In the violence that attended the 2008 elections, 80% of the victims of such violence were known to have had a role in the electoral process above and beyond that of merely being opposition supporters. Most of the abductions and executions were at the hands of a death squad and took place on four particular days period with the victims being clearly targeted for their political effectiveness rather than random killings.” [7a]

3.6 The International Committee of the Red Cross noted:

“Political violence persists at the local level. At the top there is a veneer of opposition to political violence and Mugabe himself has even made statements discouraging such violence. But these are words, nothing is ever done in fact, and it is known that perpetrators can act with impunity. There is undoubtedly violence occurring in relation to the Constitutional Outreach process and in some areas that process has been halted because of concerns about levels of violence. However, it is the source’s opinion that ZANU-PF has taken an active decision not to unleash the full force of political violence in relation to the constitutional referendum, not least because to have done so would have infuriated the South Africans during the soccer world cup.

“It is extremely difficult to gauge the actual levels of current political violence because of an absence of reliable information. This means that the same information tends to circulate continually and is often uncorroborated. Thus, what was in fact one incident comes to be reported as two separate ones, and motives and outcomes can become confused. It has still not even been possible to ascertain how many MDC supporters were really ‘disappeared’ in 2008, even though the MDC is now in government and presumably has the capacity to undertake the work.

“The source gave an example of a reports circulating in civil society of a political incident in which someone’s house was burned down. When the source actually sent someone to investigate, it turned out to be the culmination of a long running neighbourly dispute, as confirmed by the ‘victim’ but there was still reluctance to admit this. This leads to an

overstatement of actual levels of violence and has sometimes led to a situation where people talk about the current situation as though it is in some ways similar to 2008 when in fact there is no comparison.

“However, although the source believes that current levels of actual political violence may be lower than reported, there is great potential for levels to increase to, or even to exceed 2008 levels when the elections come round, and predicts that it will be a very difficult time.” [8a]

3.7 The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum noted:

“It is important to note that violence always rises during election periods. Most current political violence is linked to the Constitutional Outreach process. It is not systematic but such as there is tends to be perpetrated by War Vets. Ordinary people who say the wrong things at meetings may be threatened, beaten, have their house burnt down, or be banished from their community. Higher profile figures are liable to be arrested and if so face torture which may include falanga and electric shock treatment.

“Otherwise, levels of political violence are currently low, with more emphasis on threats along the lines of stay in line or expect to face worse violence than in 2008. The infrastructure to deliver large scale violence remains in place but at the moment violence is largely restricted to the constitutional process.” [9a]

3.8 An organisation that asked to remain anonymous noted:

“There is widespread concern about the potential for violence in many rural communities. Many perpetrators of violence in 2008 remain unpunished and continue to threaten. There is a fear that any future election will lead to more violence. There is uncertainty over the frequency of violence at present, and the source referred the interviewers to specific organizations that track incidents and analyse trends. The source said there was a reported pattern in traditional Zanu-PF strongholds in terms of war veterans and other groups influencing participation in meetings held for the constitution making process. Many people avoid attending such meetings.” [10a]

3.9 An International NGO noted:

“The Source is not aware of ongoing widespread physical violence at the present time and incidences of actual violence now are relatively low. However, the Source was at pains to emphasise that this is likely a consequence of the widespread and real fear that was instilled in the last round of major violence in 2008, and actual and implied threats that the victims can expect the same in the run-up to the next elections. The Source was firmly of the view that such levels of intimidation in themselves may amount to persecution even in the absence of actual physical violence.

“Assessing who may be at real risk from politically motivated violence is not as straightforward as simply the level of political activity. Much will depend on a person’s standing in society. Someone walking around in an MDC t-shirt would be putting themselves at risk anywhere in Zimbabwe. But in the rural areas, those who are considered influential may be at risk as a consequence of even a relatively low level of political activity. Examples given were teachers, professionals, business people, people with money. In such cases, especially in rural areas, it could be sufficient for it simply to be known that the person concerned is an MDC supporter for them to attract adverse

attention; the fact they have the potential to influence others may be sufficient – they need not be particularly active politically.” [11a]

3.10 The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe noted:

“There is little actual political violence at the moment. However, this is because the population has been so cowed by previous violence that they are afraid to do the sort of things that would provoke further actual violence – the threat of it is enough especially in the rural areas for traumatised local communities. This is much less the case in towns and cities but even here there is a degree of self-censorship because people are afraid of the possible consequences of speaking out. So while people travelling in Combis might discuss politics, they will always be looking over their shoulder to see if someone is listening in on the conversation who might report them.” [12a]

3.11 The Bulawayo Agenda noted:

“Ordinary people are not being threatened, but threats have been made towards activists. Threats and physical violence within Matabeleland North and South, Bulawayo, Midlands, Masvingo and Manicaland have declined since the formation of the GNU. The War Veterans and Zanu PF youth are not as vicious as they once were in Matabeleland as they are no longer taking instruction following the formation of the GNU and are instead living peacefully within their communities.” [13a]

3.12 The Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association noted:

“The current situation is peaceful – for the moment, at least. Violence is much less widespread and the violence is less open. Most of the political violence seen is at meetings between two individuals who have contrasting ideas, rather than as part of a systematic campaign. Although the situation is currently calm, there is still the potential for an upturn in violence should a big political event happen. Currently, during the COPAC process, some people have been approached after meetings in Bulawayo and threatened with violence. However, the source is not aware of any physical violence taking place.” [14a]

3.13 A faith based organisation noted:

“Violence is perpetrated by the war veterans and youth militia. This is controlled by ZANU-PF structures. The continued presence of the perpetrators maintains a continued state of tension in these areas where violence has taken place. A number of perpetrators have also been rewarded by ZANU-PF which adds to that tension. Activism is often presumed due to a link being made between civil society and membership of a political party. Involvement in aid distribution is also seen as political. A lack of participation in political actions can have the same affect. Professionals are also often perceived as part of the opposition, as are some pastors. This all depends on local ZANU-PF personalities.

“Violence has also been precipitated by victims of previous violence attempting to recover their possessions or exact retribution. In May in Mikita 10 victims attacked 2 perpetrators in a beer hall. The CIO then came for them and their families. In June, there was an incident of soldiers intimidating people in Karoi.” [15a]

3.14 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“The military is still in control and are responsible with the police for violence. The security sector needs to be reformed before we have another election or we will be playing into the hands of ZANU-PF.” [1a]

3.15 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“ZANU-PF is currently putting its campaigning strategy in place. They are identifying areas for bases to open up and recruiting youth to re-deploy in January. There are allegations that they will be receiving training from the army. Some bases will be used again and again, and others will be set up anew. Much of this depends on scrutiny of community areas by NGOs and International Organisations. RAU has established this through contacts in the communities and looks for hard physical evidence. One constituency monitored had 5 bases. In other areas the bases will rotate – being in existence for only a week or two, then moving on to another area. There is no evidence of bases in urban areas, although there are frequently bases in the peri-urban areas; for example, Epworth, outside Harare, did have a base in 2008. Rural districts can become no-go areas in the election run-up, and visitors to an area will be closely monitored. In urban areas, retaliation violence is not uncommon. Some MDC communities have developed a strategy where all members carry a whistle to attract other members if there is violence so the community can protect themselves, and some rural communities have resorted to violence themselves.” [3a]

3.16 A major international humanitarian organisation that asked to remain anonymous noted:

“There is a continuing, low level, chronic incidence of political violence and harassment, but certainly the levels are lower and the peaks have flattened. It is not, however, the case that one can attribute all current political violence to the constitutional outreach programme, as it existed to an extent before.” [16a]

What have been the main reasons for recent political violence?

3.17 An anonymous organisation noted:

“Inter-party violence.” [2a]

Who are the perpetrators of violence?

3.18 An anonymous organisation noted:

“The main offenders are reported to be ZANU PF youth militia (National Youth Service), ‘ZANU PF supporters’, security agents (from within the intelligence services [CIO and PISI]) and military figures (mainly the army).” [2a]

3.19 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“In order of involvement in political violence:

1. ZANU-PF supporters.
2. ZANU-PF youth.
3. Youth militia.
4. War veterans.

5. Police.
6. Army (since 2005 a greater involvement of the army in rural violence).
7. CIO (very low involvement in actual violence)

“There is a large pool of youth in the rural areas that ZANU-PF can draw upon in terms of recruitment for the militia. Many youth militia go on to join the police or army, which both have a high attrition rate, in particular due to HIV/AIDS related deaths. Their ages are variable. They can be very young but also in their 20s or 30s. The majority are between 16 and 30. They are the highest unemployed group in Zimbabwe and are therefore susceptible to bribes etc. We are already seeing signs of preparation for an election. There are a high number of female ZANU-PF perpetrators.” [3a]

3.20 The Commercial Farmers Union noted:

“The source reported that there appeared to be an increase in activity now, and a change from War Veterans to youth militia. There were also concerns over the issue of child soldiers, with most of the militia being aged 12-18. Between March and June this year there was an increase of 40,000 civil servants – these were mainly youth. It is possible to see the violence starting to pick up again and take from. It is occurring in the same areas as 2008.” [17a]

What recent examples do you have (nature and frequency of incidents)? (Also profiles of victims of violence – why are these people targeted?)

3.21 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“In terms of profiles, the risk would be as follows:

1. Office bearer in MDC/polling agent during elections.
2. Members of MDC (known or discovered).
3. Suspected MDC members (and possible to discover membership).
4. Those linked with NGO's, Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network.

“In a survey conducted by RAU in 2009, out of a sample of 2,200 women, over 50% reported experiences of political violence. 2% reported political rape and 14% knew someone who had been raped for political reasons.” [3a]

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

b) What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?

Summary of transcripts*

- 3.22 Most sources stated that the police were generally partisan, favouring the ZANU-PF, although a small number of officers might try to act “professionally” and there was some variation by area in the police’s approach.

An anonymous Zimbabwean organisation, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Bulawayo Agenda, Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association and Research and

Advocacy Unit all said that the police did not assist victims or investigate allegations of political violence. ZLHR noted that prosecutions of some cases were stopped by the Attorney General's office. However, the Counselling Services Unit observed that the police were a "mixed bag" and had investigated some cases of political violence though tended to favour the local political administration. An unnamed source stated that police were better disciplined and less tolerant of political violence than in the past, and an international NGO reported that the police were doing "their best".

Some sources noted that the police were sometimes directly involved in violence and intimidation - the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum stated that "many police are persecutors" -, and may do so with impunity.

The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe observed that following the 2008 elections there were encouraging signs that some perpetrators of political violence would be prosecuted but "the situation" has returned to as it was pre 2008.

ZLHR noted that the police in Bulawayo were better than those in Harare but more likely to act arbitrarily. Bulawao Agenda observed that police in Matabeleland were predominantly ethnic Shona, an ethnic minority the region, and this led at times to there being language barrier.

The International Committee for the Red Cross observed with regard to police independence, that the police were under pressure and most remained loyal to their "political masters". An unnamed faith-based NGO noted that the police followed orders and the Commercial Farmers' Union stated that the police remained part of state security machinery though there had been some shift with the arrival of the MDC minister, Theresa Makoni, to the Ministry of Home Affairs. The MMPZ noted that the police are not usually the source of political violence but took action against political activists on instruction of politicians and "senior operatives in the uniformed services".

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocuters in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocuters however users are advised to read the transcripts in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Transcript notes

The transcripts are arranged in no particular order.

3.23 An anonymous organisation noted:

"Effectively the police do nothing to protect victims of political persecution by ignoring it. They are at times complicit in identifying potential victims and on some occasions they take part in the persecution itself but in general they prefer to ignore it. However, there are a number of professionally trained officers in the force who do not want to take part in it. Many would also prefer to leave this to the CIO or militia. But many do not have an alternative in a country with such high unemployment." [2a]

3.24 The Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights noted:

"The police have not changed since 2008. They do not investigate claims of violence and they do not arrest the accused. There have been a handful of events that have been

investigated, but this is very much the exception and is generally reserved for non-political crimes. Police are not well trained and there has been a complete resistance to human rights training which is called for in the Global Political Agreement.

“Higher ranks in the Attorney General's office have halted prosecutions in the past for political reasons, or have prosecuted maliciously and selectively in the case of targeted human rights defenders. Where dossiers and evidence identifying perpetrators and linking them to crimes has been provided to the Attorney General, he has refused to prosecute and has instead targeted the individuals and institutions which have provided the information.

“The Law and Order Unit is the main culprit in violations. Police, on instructions “from above” give instructions to the AG's office and determine who is prosecuted, even insisting on proceeding with cases where prosecutors have given advice that no case can be sustained. More than 300 people released on bail have had their bail revoked through the invocation of section 121 of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act – which suspends bail for 7 days to give the state time to file an appeal. In almost all cases, an appeal is never filed, or is filed and dismissed, reinforcing the argument that s121 is being used to persecute human rights defenders.

“Teachers, politicians, lawyers and members of the Zimbabwean Electoral Commission have had charges dating from between 2005 and 2008 reviewed and they have been summoned back to court as an intimidatory tactic and to hamper their ordinary work and activities.

“The police in Bulawayo are better than in Harare, although they are also known to act arbitrarily.

“There is generally no real pattern to police targeting. Clearly some are individuals who have annoyed them or at the behest of ZANU-PF politicians, but sometimes it is not possible to ascertain any method or reason. However, where certain individuals or sectors are targeted there is clearly a lot of strategising and groundwork which is undertaken in the targeting.” [6a]

3.25 The Counselling Services Unit noted:

“Police performance is a mixed bag. They will react to and investigate some allegations of political violence although they tend to take action mainly where the political structure which is under investigation is falling out of favour. Police are at least generally co-operative with the Source now, but still tend where farm/land issues are concerned to side firmly with the local party structures. There has been an interesting undercurrent developing among the police of resistance to ZANU-PF but the Source expects that to be reversed now that the political structure has access to diamonds and therefore can reassert its control through economic means.

“Torture – in the form of beatings - by police is a routine part of their criminal investigation procedures and is not necessarily linked to politics. Political activists who are targeted by Military Intelligence and the CIO are likely to be tortured and these organisations used a wide range of more ‘sophisticated’ methods including e.g. waterboarding.” [7a]

3.26 An organisation noted:

“The police are generally better disciplined and following proper protocol than in the past and there is a general opinion that they are less tolerant of political violence. The police cannot operate independently of certain powerful, partisan forces within government. The organisation was not able to point to any statistics but expressed the view that the police are generally less tolerant of political violence than they were in the past. They attributed this to directions from ZANU-PF who are seeking to rely more on intimidation and less on actual physical violence.” [10a]

3.27 The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe noted:

“There were encouraging signs after the 2008 election that there might be a real will among the police to bring at least some of the perpetrators of political violence to justice. But after a number of convictions of ZANU-PF perpetrators, many of whom were in fact scapegoats in any case, ZANU-PF ‘got cold feet’ and the situation now has reverted to what it was up to 2008, with effective impunity for most of those who commit political violence in support of the ZANU-PF cause.” [12a]

3.28 The Bulawayo Agenda noted:

“The police are not helping victims of political violence at all and they are still seen as liked to Zanu PF. The police in Matabeleland are Shona, despite Shona being a minority population. There is mistrust of the police and there is also sometimes a language barrier, although at times this is falsely created.” [13a]

3.29 The Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association noted:

“The police have not acted so far. The perception is that they are there to serve Zanu PF, as Zanu PF are protecting police jobs.” [14a]

3.30 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“The police are very partisan. The perpetrators of violence include the police and that is the responsibility of a handful of senior officers who do not want to see reform. However, many officers do not want to see violence and want a new Zimbabwe.” [1a]

3.31 A major international organisation noted:

“In parts of the country and in relation to certain programmes, the police are trying to do their best to help. However, in some areas the police have been associated with violence and intimidation or at the very least not stopped it. Elsewhere they are more often the perpetrators of violence and intimidation rather than protectors.” [16a]

See the transcript of the FFM meeting with the GALZ (Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe) representative for information about the human rights situation for gay men and lesbians.

Are the police able to operate independently?

3.32 The International Committee of the Red Cross noted:

“There is no doubt that the machinery of repression is still in place. Its origins can be traced back to before independence and it is an extremely effective machine with tentacles that reach all parts of government. Although it supposed to have been

abolished the Joint Operational Command still exists in fact and still controls things. Some police try to uphold the law but they face intense pressure and most are loyal, even if secretly reluctantly, to their political masters.

“There are some determinedly independent judges in the High Court in particular, whose courage is remarkable. But the trouble is that although they will where appropriate make orders e.g. for farm invaders to leave, those orders will not be enacted by the police if they run contrary to the wishes of ZANU-PF.” [8a]

3.33 A faith based organisation noted:

“The Police generally follow orders from a central command.” [15a]

3.34 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“A small number of police are trying to do their job professionally, but they don’t last very long.” [3a]

3.35 The Commercial Farmers Union noted:

“Many are no[t] happy with events in Zimbabwe but have [no] alternative but to stay within the police force. The current salary of \$150 per month is low but better than being unemployed. They are still being used as part of the state security machinery although there has been a shift since Makoni became co-Minister of Home Affairs. However the effectiveness of the police still varies from district to district. Many officers are politically promoted.” [17a]

Are police in some areas more partisan than in other areas?

3.36 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“The role of the police in rural areas is to prevent political violence from being discovered.” [3a]

Are the police partisan in their response to political violence and persecution?

3.37 The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum noted:

“Rather than being protectors, many police are persecutors and are effectively a paramilitary wing of ZANU-PF. MDC statements about the need for police reform have not been backed up by action and have little hope of achieving anything significant.” [9a]

3.38 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“In general they will not prosecute people reported as perpetrators of political violence. They apply legislation in an inappropriate way (POSA for example). They are increasingly involved in violence.” [3a]

How do the police identify particular targets for persecution?

3.39 An anonymous organisation noted:

“Civil society’s activities in Zimbabwe are very open, so identifying targets would be straightforward. Traditional leadership structures such as chiefs and headmen are extensively used in rural communities. Informants in rural areas are also used.” [2a]

3.40 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“They share information with other parts of the security sector.” [3a]

3.41 The Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ) noted:

“Gay rights activists may be targeted by the police, CIO and CID. This will generally be in the form of harassment - these agencies will typically approach an activist and try to impart a sense of fear that what they are doing is wrong, is not acceptable and they shouldn’t be encouraging others. There have been isolated cases of arbitrary arrest of gay men and gay rights activists and searches of their properties and person, often in an attempt to find such things as membership lists. Detention following such arrests tends not to be for very long - when it hears of such cases GALZ works with Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights . The longest that a GALZ activist has been detained is for 6 days. Ordinary gay men are as far as GALZ is aware never detained for longer than 48 hours. GALZ is not aware of any incidents of official violence against gay men since the formation of the GNU.

“GALZ attributes the police attitude to a misunderstanding of GALZ’s role - they sometimes think it is an underground organisation and have suggested that it is used as a channel by the UK and USA. Much also depends on what the President has said - he hasn’t made any anti-gay comments recently but had not distanced himself from comments made in the past.

“GALZ has recently enjoyed a ‘surprising’ degree of support from other civil society organisations and GALZ thinks this may also have focused more attention on them.” [4a]

Are the police active or reactive to political events?

3.42 An anonymous organisation noted:

“In general the police prefer to avoid political issues and they are not usually the source of political violence. But they are forced to take action against political activists (arrests and detentions etc) on the instructions of politicians and senior operatives in the uniformed services.” [2a]

3.43 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“The police are generally partisan towards ZANU-PF.” [3a]

3.44 The Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe noted:

“GALZ has a resource centre in Milton Park in Harare. They work well with the local police in Milton Park. There was a raid on the GALZ offices in May 2010 by Harare Central Police and the Source’s home was searched at the same time. The Source was not at his home at the time but the police harassed the people who were there. No-one

was hurt. GALZ attributes these raids to their active involvement in the constitutional outreach programme.” [4a]

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

c) Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Summary of transcripts*

3.45 All organisations interviewed stated that most political violence had, and continued, to be centred on Mashonaland (Central, East, and West: particularly the northern parts of these provinces), Manicaland, Masvingo and Midlands provinces. The Mashonaland provinces were noted as being particularly problematic. Some sources noted that the pattern of current (and possible future) violence generally corresponded to the marginal constituencies which were most strongly contested in the 2008 elections, areas which ZANU-PF wished to retake in any forthcoming elections.

Most organisations considered Matabeleland (North and South provinces) to be relatively safe (the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum considered the provinces to be “very safe”), although some organisation noted that the potential for sporadic violence remained. Some sources observed that there was (and will be) less violence in Matabeleland because the ZANU-PF had little chance of winning the provinces in future elections.

Rural areas, specifically those provinces considered by ZANU-PF to be its heartlands - Mashonaland (Central, East, and West, Manicaland, Masvingo and Midlands - were considered to be less open politically and more prone to violence than the main cities and towns.

Urban areas, specifically Bulawayo and Harare, were considered by most organisations to be relatively safe from violence, especially for ordinary MDC supporters. A major NGO noted that urban areas benefited from higher levels of scrutiny by the media, civil society and international organisation. However, several organisations noted that small urban centres such as Bindura (Mashonaland Central), Chiredzi (Masvingo) and Buhera (Manicaland), along with some densely-populated urban areas, including Epworth (south Harare) and other districts south of Harare, were also subject to the risk of sporadic violence.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocuters in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocuters however users are advised to read the transcripts in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Transcript notes

The transcripts are arranged in no particular order.

3.46 An anonymous organisation noted:

“Yes – more seriously contested areas are still political battlegrounds, as stated previously, such as: Mashonaland North, Manicaland, Midlands, Masvingo provinces and in localities such as Bindura, Chiredzi, Buhera etc. There also exists some degree of intimidation in ZANU-PF strongholds.” [2a]

3.47 The Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights noted:

“Mashonaland East and Central, North Manicaland and border areas between Midlands, Masvingo and Manicaland have higher levels of violence than other areas, with low levels reported in Matabeleland.” [5a]

3.48 The Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, noted:

“Mashonaland East, Central and West, Manicaland and Masvingo all have a higher incidence of violence than other areas. Midlands province has had some sporadic violence.

“Mashonaland is a 'no-go' area for MDC supporters as it remains a ZANU-PF stronghold, and they face harassment and arrests.

“Masvingo and Manicaland have seen some retaliation by MDC members against perpetrators of the 2008 violence and intimidation linked to the manner in which people voted in the 2008 elections and the retribution they suffered.

“In general, violence is concentrated in rural areas and high density suburbs of Harare, such as Epworth and Mbare, where policing has always been heavy handed. High density urban areas experience occasional arrests and beatings. Bulawayo has occasional incidents.” [6a]

3.49 The Counselling Services Unit, noted:

“Regional variations in political violence and intimidation are still virtually identical to those in 2008. The Source has provided a map which is appended to this report which shows the patterns of violence then, and where it is likely to happen in the future is political violence does re-emerge on a large scale. The Source added Epworth and the high density suburbs to the south of Harare to the usual list of political violence hotspots. On the whole the political violence in these parts of Harare tend to be brawls, often fuelled by alcohol, between competing factions, in some cases recently linked to loyalties to different candidates for the post of provincial governor. People who take no active part in politics or who do not join the gangs are unlikely to be involved in such violence. It would in any case be impossible for someone who was not able to demonstrate loyalty to the particular faction controlling an area to live in that area.” [7a]

3.50 The International Committee of the Red Cross, noted:

“Current and future political violence will follow very closely the geographic distribution of the violence in 2008, concentrated in Mashonaland Central and East, Manicaland and Masvingo. That is because it is targeted at areas which were previously ZANU-PF strongholds but where they lost ground to the MDC, in an attempt to regain that ground. Targets will primarily be political activists and former ZANU-PF voters who defected to the MDC. Matabeleland on the other hand is reasonably OK.” [8a]

3.51 The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum noted:

“The geographic spread of political violence and intimidation, and the likely hotspots for escalation in future, remain the same rural areas as experienced the worst violence in 2008. Matabeleland is very safe, with very little political violence there even in 2008. This is because ZANU-PF knows it will never win an election there so doesn’t waste its time.

“High density urban areas can be considered as ‘quasi rural’ in the sense that the people who live there have the same capacity to upset the status quo as those in rural areas, largely because they have little to lose. That is why they are subject to more concerted efforts at political control than those in other parts of the cities.” [9a]

3.52 An organisation that asked to remain anonymous noted:

“It is thought that political violence is variable, with increases at the time of elections or significant events. The Source thought that statistics and reports of political violence are not always accurate and is sometimes over-reported because of an understandable desire to draw attention to the problem. The source again referred the interviewers to specific organisations that track trends and geographic distribution of violence.” [10a]

3.53 An International NGO which asked to remain anonymous, noted:

“Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Manicaland and Masvingo were identified as particular ‘hotspots’ both for political interference in aid provision and for political violence.

“Although stating that levels of actual political violence are currently quite low, the Source was of the view that the potential for political violence is significantly higher in most rural areas, with the exception of Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South, than it is in urban areas. This is because violence in rural areas can more easily be hidden and because that is where the ZANU strongholds tend to be located.

“Urban areas tend to be much more open to the scrutiny of the media, civil society, international organisations etc., ZANU does not enjoy such high levels of support, and the police are more likely to intervene to stop political violence, whoever the perpetrator, for fear that a violent incident in an urban area could escalate and not be containable in the way that rural disturbances could be. For the same reasons levels of intimidation and threat are much lower in urban areas and therefore low level MDC supporters who feel no need to be active would probably not currently be at physical risk or real risk of intimidation in urban areas.” [11a]

3.54 The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe noted:

“Although levels of actual physical violence are low across the country, the tensions, and potential for a resurgence in political violence remain greatest in the provinces of Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Masvingo, Manicaland and Midland provinces – the key driver being ZANU’s desire to reclaim lost political ground in what they see as their heartlands. In Matabeleland on the other hand, ZANU does not exert sufficient control to orchestrate large-scale violence, although there is the potential for incidents of targeted violence.

“The source considered that there is potential for even higher levels of political violence before the anticipated 2011 elections than were in 2008. It is not however possible to predict with any confidence – much will depend on ZANU’s assessment of its own prospects in the immediate pre-election period. If ZANU believes it can win an overall majority by sleight of hand, it will try to do so. But if not, it may unleash unprecedented violence on the basis that it has nothing to lose.” [12a]

3.55 The Bulawayo Agenda noted:

“The COPAC process has seen war veterans active in other areas, but not around Matabeleland and the surrounding regions. Matabeleland is much more free from violence than Mashonaland because Zanu PF acknowledge that they will not get votes.

“The people of Matabeleland do not believe that the national healing process is intended for them, and instead believe it is an attempt to placate the people of Mashonaland who were affected by violence in 2008.

“The source noted that in Victoria Falls, a Residents’ Association was not permitted to hold a COPAC meeting and that another groups in Matabeleland South had had low turnouts at meetings. In Bulawayo, everyone is permitted to speak freely at meetings, although they are more cautious in public due to uncertainty about who is around at that time.” [13a]

3.56 The Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association noted:

“Matabeleland Civil Society are monitoring the process, and have noticed that there have been problems of intimidation in Insiza, where 300 people attended a meeting, but only one spoke. Everyone agreed with the single person except for one group, who were noticed by a War Veteran and threatened outside. Generally, people are more free to speak in Bulawayo than in the surrounding urban areas.” [14a]

3.57 A faith based organisation noted:

“Violence can be linked to strong ZANU-PF areas but also to areas where the MDC has taken over a previously strong ZANU-PF area. Areas where the COPAC process is due to move through are also prone to violence. Those most affected in general terms are Mashonaland East, Central and West and Midlands. In Mutare there were pockets of violence during the COPAC meetings.” [15a]

3.58 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“Yes. Violence is more common in Mashonaland, Midlands, Manicaland and Masvingo. These are all ex-ZANU-PF strongholds that ZANU-PF wants to win back from the MDC. They are doing this by cracking down on the people that they think made them lose.” [1a]

3.59 A major international humanitarian organisation noted:

“There is no safe hiding place for political activists and others with a sufficiently high political profile and it is therefore extremely important that asylum claims are considered on a case by case basis.” [16a]

3.60 The Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ) noted:

“Bulawayo is more open and tolerant and has a very different atmosphere from Harare. People in Bulawayo are more politically active and willing to push for their rights. There is a gay nightclub in the middle of town. GALZ thinks this different attitude may be related to proximity to South Africa. More generally, freedom of expression is still closed - people do not feel able to speak freely.” [4a]

3.61 Radio Dialogue noted:

“People in urban areas have less fear about speaking openly than those in rural areas. Bulawayo is more open than Harare and many civil society groups operate from there.” [25a]

If so, why? What makes a difference in this respect?

3.62 An anonymous organisation noted:

“Areas where the votes were closest in the last election – and the need for ZANU PF to regain lost loyalty.” [2a]

Is violence/repression more or less centred in urban or rural areas – or is there no difference?

3.63 An anonymous organisation noted:

“It is generally more prevalent in rural communities and politically disputed small regional urban centres, such as Bindura and other small towns.

“Harare is more politically open than the rural areas. Areas that were strongly contested during the last election and where majorities are slim are still battlegrounds in political terms. For example, Bindura, which is an ex ZANUP-PF stronghold, now MDC, and where MDC members have been charged with offences, beaten and locked up as part of a campaign of intimidation. Buhera is another example. ZANUP-PF is also now fighting back in urban areas where the MDC has the majority, by undermining MDC councils. The fact that the MDC have to be seen to answerable gives ZPF an advantage.” [2a]

3.64 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“The remotest parts of the rural areas are the most affected by violence but it is not uncommon in the urban areas, for example the riots in Epworth this year.” [1a]

3.65 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“Rural areas are more affected. ZANU-PF are massively outnumbered in the urban areas but there is violence in the per-urban areas such as Epworth in Harare. In the urban areas ZANU-PF would use the army for political violence.” [3a]

Are areas that strongly support ZANU-PF or the MDC more or less prone to violence towards the opposite group?

3.66 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association, noted:

“In Manicaland for example, and area lost by ZANU-PF in the last election, people have been beaten up and killed but people still know which way they want to vote. It will be very difficult for ZANU-PF to regain control in those areas. As I mentioned before, the Zimbabwean people have lost their patience. 90% of Zimbabweans do not believe in violence. Internal political squabbling within the parties resulting in violence is also not uncommon. A recent incident within the MDC at Harvest House is an example.” [1a]

3.67 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“Mashonaland East, West and Central are all ZANU-PF areas which have high levels of violence. Also areas of Masvingo, Manicaland and Midlands experience violence.

“Other areas which have not experienced the same levels of violence are, for example, Matabeleland North and South. ZANU-PF has not won a seat in these areas since the 1980s. Intimidation can still be high in those areas though. In 2005, all violence was targeted at MDC areas (although predominantly the rural areas). Even areas that are perceived as ZANU-PF strongholds will experience significant violence as the MDC will be forced to contest these areas in order to win a majority in Parliament.” [3a]

What causes violence to occur in these areas (e.g. political meetings, party regalia worn)? Details of specific incidents

3.68 An anonymous organisation noted:

“Arrest on often false charges of MDC MPs and other activist political and CSO figures. Recent examples occurred in Chipinge East, Chimanimani West and Gutu East. A common charge is abusing agricultural inputs in 2007. 7 MDC and 1 ZPF were arrested in 2009 for this offence. All were from Masvingo and Manicaland. With regard to the causes of political violence, yes, political meetings and the wearing of party regalia do often lead to violence, almost invariably where the MDC attempt to operate in politically disputed areas. But the use of psychological violence – threats and intimidation – is also frequently used to influence (and terrorize) vulnerable populations (especially in the rural areas). Examples are often made in local communities to illustrate the consequences of defiance.” [2a]

3.69 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

“ZANU-PF believes in violence. To win an election they believe they need violence to force people into believing their propaganda. They see violence as a way to regaining lost constituencies. People who work in the Human Rights areas or who push HR issues are seen as enemies or opposition in political terms. Therefore anyone who interacts with these people is also a target. Zimrights members are often presumed to be MDC supporters. Also, resistance to participate in ZANU-PF activities is a key factor in violence – anyone who resists in this respect is also a target. Chief and Headmen are key. Most are partisan and perpetrate violence.

“Details of specific incidents.

“Violence caused by ZANU-PF during the constitution making process at Harare International Conference Centre. Riots in Epworth in March/April this year between MDC

and ZANU-PF supporters. Internal political violence within ZANU-PF in Mashonaland West in March/April this year.” [1a]

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

4. INTERNAL RELOCATION

a) Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

Summary of transcripts*

- 4.1 Sources stated that there were no legal requirements or restrictions when moving and settling in other parts of Zimbabwe. While in theory resettlement to another part of the country was possible, most organisations agreed that relocation to rural areas would be difficult for a number of reasons. Several organisations noted that where this happened, local chiefs (who are usually associated with ZANU-PF) would need to be informed, and would have responsibility for deciding whether land should be allocated to new arrivals.

Most organisations stated that relocation to urban areas posed few problems – the main constraint being economic. However, relocation to smaller urban areas may be more problematic for non-economic reasons.

A major NGO stated that those who had attracted the adverse attention of the main political parties would find it difficult to relocate even in urban areas. However, the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum believed that MDC supporters would be relatively safe if relocating within MDC dominated areas, noting that the MDC is “quite well organised” and can “protect” those at risk of violence.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocuters in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocuters however users are advised to read the transcripts in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Transcript notes

The transcripts are arranged in no particular order.

- 4.2 An anonymous organisation noted:

“There are no legal restrictions but many find that they are vulnerable if they move to rural areas. After “Operation Murambatsvina” in 2005 to destroy and punish the MDC’s urban support-base, many people were forced into rural areas and were treated as outcasts. However, rural communities in Zimbabwe are close knit and local headmen and/or CIO officers will want to know where a person has come from. It is generally unheard of for people to move to areas where they have no connection. A small number of people may move to a rural area new to them if that is part of the requirements of an existing job for example, but with the current rate of unemployment this is rare. Rural areas are more tense in terms of political affiliation. Questions would be asked of those returning from overseas. The United Kingdom is the least popular country in terms of the reputation it has through state media.” [2a]

4.3 The Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights noted:

“Migration between rural areas is very difficult – the Chief of the new area has to be informed why you are moving and will then allocate land. Those who are politically active will find it even more difficult as the Chiefs are normally associated with Zanu PF. Moving to urban areas from rural areas is easier, as long as migrants have the necessary funds to find accommodation. The only constraint on moving to an urban area is economic. There may be questions asked upon return to the home area.

“Those returning from overseas to rural areas will, in general, not face problems if they still have family members living there. People are more concerned with current activity rather than past events, and although questions are asked about returnees in rural areas, there is usually no sinister basis for this and those who do not participate in political activity on return will not have any additional problems when compared with other residents.” [5a]

4.4 The Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights noted:

“Relocation to rural areas is very difficult as there is no land available to be allocated to new arrivals without the authority of the chief in that specific area. Movement to urban areas is possible but uncommon as economic reasons prevent people paying for accommodation. Employment prospects will affect where people migrate to. Culturally, moving between rural areas is not common; those who move to a new rural area are likely to arouse suspicion as members of the community are well-known and outsiders are easily identified and targeted by those who remain suspicious about why they have moved to that area.” [6a]

4.5 The Counselling Services Unit noted:

“It is not possible to leave or settle in most rural areas without the agreement of the ZANU-PF area commander who might be the Chief, the head of Youth Militia or anyone else with the most influence locally. The Source explained that in the traditional rural social structures such decisions would not in any case happen without discussion within the community and the wider community. On the other hand, the need is to know, not necessarily to prevent. Although the need to explain applies also in MDC dominated areas, where there will still be a ZANU-PF structure, Matabeleland is an exception because it traditionally has a high migrant population.

“It is not possible to move in and out of rural areas without permission from the local village head, who is also the ZANU village chairman. Movement is monitored and questioned by the local militia structures, and people are fined if explanations are not satisfactory. Migration decisions are made by family structures.

“In the time before visas were introduced for Zimbabwean visitors it was the aim of every family to have one family member in the UK and one in South Africa to send back remittances which have always been an extremely important part of the rural economy. That remains an ambition but one that is achievable by fewer people since the introduction of the visa regime.

“Matabeleland traditionally has a higher migrant population.” [7a]

4.6 The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum noted:

“The question of moving between different rural areas is not as simple as one of political affiliation; there are also questions of ethnicity. It is always difficult but it would for example be easier for an Ndebele to move to an Ndebele area, and likewise for Shona. There are some mixed areas but even if a member of an ethnic group were to move to an area dominated by their own group, they would still face difficulties. Much will depend on the local leadership, with some being more tolerant than others.

“It is, though, difficult for ZANU-PF supporters to harm MDC supporters in MDC dominated areas because the MDC tend to be quite well organised in those areas and can protect those who might otherwise be at risk of political violence by the threat of retribution.

“The Forum has not come across any cases of returnees from the UK being mistreated and would expect to know of any such cases because its member organisations are represented across the country. It works closely with the Zimbabwe Association in London and is alerted where there are concerns a returnee might be at risk but has not come across any cases where that is happened. They are unable to say that there have been no such cases but if there have been they have been isolated examples. They do however have concerns that those who are known to have claimed asylum in the UK would be considered necessarily to have been disloyal to Zimbabwe and may therefore face additional problems reintegrating because the fact that they had claimed asylum would become known. This would not apply to returning economic migrants unless their families were known to be political activists. The Forum considers that the abolition of hate speech against asylum seekers returning from the UK is central to creating a more conducive environment.” [9a]

4.7 An organisation that asked to remain anonymous noted:

“There are no legal restrictions on movement and the Source did not anticipate that a returnee from the UK who relocated to the cities would face discrimination on that basis but would face the same difficulties everyone else faced as a result of the economic situation.” [10a]

4.8 An International NGO who asked to remain anonymous noted:

“There are no legal restrictions. However, the intelligence systems of the main political parties are sophisticated and it would not be possible for those who have come to the adverse attention of a party to avoid that risk by relocating within Zimbabwe. This applies equally to rural and urban areas. Thus, once a low level but influential MDC supporter had been singled out for attention in a rural area had been identified as such, it would not be possible for that person to avoid the threat by relocating to an urban area because that knowledge would follow them to the city, even though someone with a similar profile in the city would be unlikely to attract the same level of interest and so would probably not be at risk.” [11a]

4.9 The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe noted:

“Before the emergence of the MDC as a political force, there was no difficulty for a Zimbabwean living anywhere in the country. Since then the emergence of local Chiefs as powerful figures within ZANU-PF has seen that change. To relocate from one rural area

to another a person will generally have to obtain a letter of reference from the former and future community leaders. In the absence of either, relocation between rural areas is not likely to be practicable. This can apply even in generally MDC dominated areas because even there the local chiefs tend to be ZANU supporters. In Matabeleland the situation more permissive and generally there should not be a problem. Much will depend on the attitude of individual chiefs but they are 'more mature' and tolerant of political differences.

"There are no such problems in towns and cities – anyone can live anywhere, and if they have money to invest in e.g. building a house they will be positively welcomed." [12a]

4.10 The Bulawayo Agenda noted:

"Movement between two rural areas would be very difficult as many questions would be asked about anyone moving. Moving from a rural area to an urban area, such as Bulawayo, would not cause any problems from an ethnic or safety point of view. Similarly, there would be no such problem when moving between two urban areas.

"The source was aware of four people who had returned to Zimbabwe from the UK, one of whom was a failed asylum seeker, although this was not common knowledge. She was not aware that any of them had faced any difficulty on return to Zimbabwe." [13a]

4.11 The Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association noted:

"People are free to move to the urban areas without fear, the only hardship being economic. However, moving from an urban area to a rural area, or between two rural areas, is difficult as questions are asked.

"There has been an influx of Shona to Bulawayo, and some local residents do not like this and there are occasional incidents of violence. However, there are only isolated cases of this." [14a]

4.12 A faith based organisation which asked to remain anonymous noted:

"In terms of people moving from one area to another, then they could be targeted. In small towns such as Victoria Falls and Hwange people could also be at risk." [15a]

4.13 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association noted:

"[Are there any restrictions on moving and resettling within Zimbabwe] Not that I am aware of." [1a]

4.14 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

"If a person were to move from a rural area to an urban one, relocation would be easy. Moving back to a rural area from urban would make a person highly visible. A person coming back from overseas could lie about where they had been but would have to quickly learn ZANU-PF systems of identification in the rural areas to be accepted (i.e. responses to political slogans etc). The majority of Ndebele will find it difficult going back to Shona areas (for example Mashonaland).

"There is a Shona presence in Matabeleland, and many Ndebele speak Shona. IN Bulawayo, about 80% are Ndebele but many of the businessmen and Government posts

are Shona. There was a large movement of Shona to Matabeleland in the 1980s and into the 1990s. There is a certain amount of ethnic tension due to this. The majority of Ndebele over Shona in part of the country is diminishing. Large numbers of the Ndebele youth are migrating to South Africa. The proportion of elderly in the rural areas is increasing.” [3a]

- 4.15 A major international humanitarian organisation which asked to remain anonymous noted:

“The source is not aware of any specific issues with people moving from one part of the country to another.” [16a]

- 4.16 The Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe noted:

“It would be harder for a gay man to reintegrate into a new area than it would be for a heterosexual man. The tolerance comes from familiarity and people are more tolerant of members of their own community.” [4a]

Is there any requirement to officially register in a new area – if so with whom? If so, how is this enforced?

- 4.17 An anonymous organisation noted:

“There is no legal requirement to register in a new area.” [2a]

- 4.18 The Research and Advocacy Unit noted:

“It can be difficult however in terms of where a person is registered to vote. It is difficult to change the area a person is registered to and they may therefore have to return to a rural area to vote. The Registrar General’s Department requires a large amount of documentation to alter a person’s voter registration area.” [3a]

Is there any differentiation in restrictions, depending on area? If so, where?

- 4.19 The Research and Advocacy Unit, noted:

“During elections movement in rural areas is tightly controlled, particularly in Mashonaland.” [3a]

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

5. INTERVIEWS WITH RETURNEES (COMPLETE TRANSCRIPTS)

Summary of transcripts*

- 5.1 All the returnees who were interviewed stated that they had previously claimed asylum in the United Kingdom. Reasons given for claiming asylum were the unstable political environment and political violence. Most returnees arrived back in Zimbabwe in 2010; one returned in January 2009 – all returned voluntarily. Three returned using their own

passport; three returned using an Emergency Travel Document (ETD); and three interviewees did not state what document was used to re-enter Zimbabwe.

None of the returnees reported any significant problems upon arrival at Harare airport. Three returnees were either questioned and/or had their bags searched. One returnee (interview number 4) was required to pay a US\$20 bribe to security staff at Harare airport. While one returnee (3) stated that he was concerned that he would face problems at Harare airport, these concerns proved unfounded. Another returnee (5) believed that airport staff would think that he was a failed asylum seeker because he was travelling under an ETD. However, the returnee stated that apart from being questioned about why he was travelling on the ETD no significant problems were encountered.

Most returnees reported that they were aware of others who had returned to Zimbabwe (sometimes on the same flight) without any problems. While most were unable to comment in detail, a couple of returnees noted that they were still in contact with a small number of returnees who appear to be free of harassment from state officials.

Most returnees stated that they had received assistance from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) on arrival in Zimbabwe.

All returnees stated that they had re-settled either in Harare (4 returnees), or Bulawayo (3 returnees), and that they had not experienced any problems since re-settling in the country. All returnees stated that they had not experienced any problems in obtaining accommodation.

All returnees reported that they were concerned about divulging their previous asylum status in the UK – all were concerned that they would be discriminated against if they did so. Most stated that they had only told close family and friends about their previous asylum status because of these fears.

* This summarises the main points raised by interlocutors in response to the particular question(s) for the convenience of users. Every effort has been taken to ensure the summary accurately reflects what was reported by the interlocutors however users are advised to read the transcripts in full for a complete and detailed picture.

Transcript notes

5.2 Returnee 1:

“This returnee claimed asylum in 2008 based on threats made to her family in the rural areas while she was studying in the UK. She had applied for an extension of her student visa but this had been refused. She returned to Zimbabwe in January 2009 using her own passport.

“She encountered no problems upon returning to Harare airport and passed through immigration control without being questioned. She then returned to Mashonaland and her parents' home. She has not had any contact with the authorities in Zimbabwe linked to her stay in the UK, but has had comments directed at her by local residents about the time she spent out of Zimbabwe. She expressed the opinion that rural areas are different because everyone knows each other and each other's business.

“She stated that those who return from the UK and exhibit normal behaviour will probably not encounter any problems simply because they've been in the UK, but bringing attention to travel may result in verbal abuse.

“She has limited political interest, but has stated that her parents attend Zanu PF meetings and maintain a pretence of supporting them to avoid reprisals. Rural populations are told to attend Zanu PF meetings and are singled out if they do not.

“She has moved to Harare and stated that there is more freedom there and less intimidation. She moved to Harare for economic reasons as the income from the family business was not enough to support the family. She has been unsuccessful in finding a job in Harare and believes that she may be discriminated against by employers because she has been in the UK. She does not tell people that she has claimed asylum in the UK. Many Zimbabwe nationals in the UK believe that they are discriminated against when asylum decisions are made. They do not discuss their immigration status.

“Although in the cities people still do not feel free to say what they think, there is not the pressure to e.g. attend ZANU-PF meetings that there is in rural areas. She believes that it is possible to have a discussion in public in Harare about politics, but consideration needs to be given to different environments and behaviour should be adapted accordingly, for instance when in the area of the State House in Harare.

“She believes that there is nothing to fear in returning to Zimbabwe from the UK. The economic situation in the country is difficult, but rebuilding the economy will be easier if Zimbabwe nationals in the UK return to help.”

[Return to contents](#)

5.3 Returnee 2:

“This returnee claimed asylum on arrival in the UK in September 2002, based on political affiliation, specifically that he did not support Zanu PF and was afraid of being coerced into supporting them. He was stabbed by Zanu PF members in Zimbabwe and suffered injuries to his throat, chest and back. His asylum claim was refused on arrival after he was refused entry, however he did not pursue the claim and remained in the UK illegally until May 2010, when he decided to return to Zimbabwe to look after his ageing mother.

“IOM assisted with obtaining an emergency travel document as his passport had expired. He was not asked any questions regarding his application at the Zimbabwean Embassy in London and passed through immigration control at Harare airport without difficulty.

“Upon return to Zimbabwe, he received money for temporary accommodation from IOM, and returned to Nyanga to care for his mother before returning to Harare to find a job. He has not faced any mistreatment because of his stay in the UK. Only close friends know that he was there, but he is happy to tell people where he has been. He normally speaks in Shona, but when he speaks in English, people sometimes detect an English accent.

“He travelled back with a large group of returnees and has kept in contact with one lady he sat next to on the plane. She has not told him that she has encountered any problems, but he does not know for certain there have been no problems for her.

“The assistance he has received from IOM has not been enough. He has received help, but without cash he has found it impossible to negotiate the best possible price for goods for his business.

“He does not have an interest in politics and does not discuss political matters. He fears the economic situation, although conditions are improving, shops have stock, there is fuel and the infrastructure is improving. He believes that Zimbabwe nationals in the UK want to return because the situation is improving, but there are no jobs available.”

[Return to contents](#)

5.4 Returnee 3:

“The Source claimed asylum in the UK on the basis of imputed political opinion in 2009. His asylum claim was refused at initial decision and at appeal. He does not want us to provide details of the basis of his asylum claim as his name and information has been published on the internet and he fears that would allow him to be identified and potentially put him at risk.

“The Source returned to Zve in May 2010. He travelled from the UK to Harare on Kenyan Airlines via Nairobi. He encountered no difficulties at Harare airport. One other returnee was on the flight but because the Source had little baggage and passed through the airport quickly, he did not witness the other’s passage through immigration etc and so does not know what their experience was.

“On the basis of his experience after leaving Zimbabwe the Source was concerned that on return to Zimbabwe he would be of interest to and at risk from those who would regard people in his position as opposition supporters. In the event, he was surprised that there was very little interest in his situation in Zimbabwe and he has encountered no problems since he returned. However, he is concerned that if it became known that he had claimed asylum in the UK and the story behind it, that could cause him difficulties, and as a consequence is unwilling to reveal that fact to employers, which leaves an eight month ‘hole’ in his cv which he fears is preventing him from getting jobs that he is very well qualified for.

“The Source is currently living in Harare. Although that is not his home area he thinks that it is the place where he has the best chance of getting a job and is in fact the place he is most familiar with. The Source confirmed that the reason he has not returned to his home area is because of the job prospects and not because he is afraid to do so. However, while saying that he is not afraid now, he indicated that there is great uncertainty about what the next elections will bring and that he may feel less safe then.

“The Source also had some interesting and thoughtful ideas about the assisted voluntary schemes operated by the IOM and on the UK’s policy for issuing visas to Zimbabweans. These are not relevant to this report but have been conveyed to the relevant people in the UK Border Agency. “

[Return to contents](#)

5.5 Returnee 4:

“This individual arrived in the UK in December 2001 and claimed asylum in November 2008 due to the political violence in Zimbabwe. The application was refused, and the subsequent appeal and reconsideration hearing dismissed. The individual applied for voluntary return to Zimbabwe in February 2010, returning on 14 May 2010. He returned via Johannesburg using an emergency travel document issued by the Zimbabwean Embassy in London, printed on paper without a watermark. On arrival at Harare airport, the individual was questioned briefly about his emergency travel document but was able to pass through entry clearance.

“He was then stopped by uniformed police after collecting his baggage, which included five pieces at 23kg each. The police asked to search his bags, but after around 30 minutes of negotiation, the individual paid the officers \$20, which was given to a more senior officer. He was then allowed to travel onward. He had to return to Harare Airport two days later to collect a final piece of baggage which had been lost en route. He was allowed to proceed and collect his bag without any questioning from officials.

“After leaving the airport on arrival, the individual proceeded to the Hatfield district of Harare to stay with a cousin. After a few days in Harare, he travelled to IOM's offices to collect his accommodation allowance, however due to some confusion, he was not able to obtain the allowance until eight weeks later. In the intervening period, he used the £500 given to him on departure from London and also had help from family and friends. He rented accommodation in the Avenues area of Harare while waiting for his accommodation allowance to arrive, and managed to persuade his landlady to wait for his rent. He has since moved back to live with his cousin in Hatfield.

“A cousin who lives in the USA has recently bought some land 10km outside Gweru, and the individual is planning to use the land for farming poultry and crops. He does not want to be known by many people in Gweru and he is concerned for his safety because he has been out of Zimbabwe for so long. However, he has not received any threats and there is no indication that anyone in Zimbabwe is aware of his asylum claim. He has made a conscious decision not to tell people this. He has experienced no problems in Zimbabwe so far but he feels that the atmosphere in the country is uncertain. He is aware of around four or five people who have returned to Zimbabwe from the UK in 2009 and 2010, and as far as he is aware they are all OK. They are located in Bulawayo, Chitungwiza and Mutare. He has no political profile and does not plan to engage in political conversations or activities.”

[Return to contents](#)

5.6 Returnee 5:

“The Source is a middle aged man. He travelled to the UK in 2000, returned to Zimbabwe in 2003, came back to the UK in 2005. He claimed asylum in the UK in April 2009 on the basis that while in Zimbabwe he had harboured friends who were sought by the Zimbabwean authorities, he was arrested by the police and CIO and beaten before being released. His asylum claim was refused and he returned to Zimbabwe under the IOM administered VARRP scheme in May 2010. He travelled from London to Harare on Kenyan Airways via Nairobi. He had to travel on an ETD because the Home Office had lost his still valid passport. At the Zimbabwean Embassy to obtain his ETD he felt he had to lie and say he had lost his passport to avoid having to say that he had claimed asylum in the UK, although he felt that they knew he had claimed asylum.

“On arrival at Harare Airport on his return he was questioned for about 10 minutes at the immigration desk about why he didn’t have a passport, during which he felt he had to lie and say he had reported the loss of his passport to the police but had lost the report. He was then allowed to proceed, passed through customs without being stopped and left the airport without further incident. He did subsequently face difficulty getting some shipped baggage from customs because they were reluctant to release it because he could not show his travel history without a passport. That was resolved when he had a friend who knew some of the customs officers to accompany him to the airport to get the baggage.

“There were 7 other VARRP returnees on the same flight as the Source. He believes they all had passports and that they went through the airport fairly quickly ahead of him, though he wasn’t really paying a lot of attention and he only actually saw one do so.

“The Source owns a house in Harare, but that is sub-let so he stayed with a friend while the baggage problem was resolved. He then travelled to Bulawayo, where he also owns a flat and is now living. He is “very happy” to be back in Bulawayo. He has had no contact from the Zimbabwean authorities. He does not however tell anyone he claimed asylum in the UK because he does not know how they would react. He does not think there would be general negativity towards people claiming asylum but he is being cautious.”

[Return to contents](#)

5.7 Returnee 6:

“The Source is an elderly married lady. She travelled to the UK in March 2004. She claimed asylum in March 2009 because political people had damaged her home in Bulawayo and she feared political persecution. Her claim was refused in December 2009. She didn’t appeal and returned to Zimbabwe in March 2010 through VARRP. She travelled to Harare on BA via Johannesburg using her own passport which had been retrieved from the Home Office by IOM.

“She passed through immigration control without difficulty. At customs, three of her six suitcases were searched. Having found nothing the customs officers waved her through. Four other VARRP returnees were on the flight with her. She didn’t notice what happened to them in the airport but she thinks they were driven off by IOM before her because of the delay while her baggage was searched.

“She was met by IOM outside the Harare Airport terminal and was driven to Harare city where she stayed the night in a guesthouse booked by IOM. IOM then drove her to Bulawayo. In Bulawayo she went to an uncle’s house initially.

“She then rented a cottage for three months. When that lease expired she moved back into the house in Bulawayo which had been damaged and is currently trying to repair it. Apart from the practical difficulties, she has had no problems since returning to Zimbabwe. She has had no contact with the Zimbabwean authorities. Only her husband knows she claimed asylum in the UK. She is very happy to be back in Bulawayo and is very grateful for all the help that IOM provided, particularly in retrieving her passport from the Home Office.”

[Return to contents](#)

5.8 Returnee 7:

“The Source is a young man. He arrived in the UK in 2001 planning to study. When his father died he no longer had the means to pursue his studies and was advised by his solicitors to claim asylum when he told them of the bad things happening in Zimbabwe. He had never been involved in politics himself but his family have been. He claimed asylum in 2004 and was refused in 2005. He returned to Zimbabwe in Jan 2010 under VARRP, travelling to Harare via Johannesburg on British Airways. He had his own passport.

“He had no problems at immigration and customs at Harare airport. He met his family outside the terminal and his brother then drove him straight to Bulawayo. He was very keen to praise the role IOM had played in his return – the flight was ‘brilliant’ and IOM ‘had arranged everything’. He has since return set up a cattle breeding business on land that was owned by his father and it is doing extremely well. The infrastructure has gone in Zimbabwe but he is still ‘determined to make it work’. He was, he said, from the day he returned to the day he was interviewed, ‘very happy’.

“He has had no problems since returning. He has only told his immediate family that he claimed asylum in the UK. That is because people are afraid to talk about having claimed asylum because if for example they talk to neighbours they might in turn tell ZANU-PF and that could be a problem. While he was in the UK, his mother was “panicking and depressed”, afraid that if ZANU-PF knew he had claimed asylum that could cause problems for him when he returned to Zimbabwe. The Source himself was no longer afraid after he had passed through immigration at Harare Airport; up to that point he was afraid because no-one knows what happens off BA flights. He knows two other returnees from the UK in Bulawayo. He doesn’t know if they claimed asylum. They have not told him that they have had any problems but they haven’t really discussed it. “

[Return to contents](#)

Annex A

LIST OF OUTLINE QUESTIONS SENT TO SOURCES BEFORE INTERVIEW

Zimbabwe Fact Finding Mission – August 2010

Interview guide

We are undertaking research to gather information on the current situation for Zimbabweans since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU), with particular interest in the following areas: Non-Governmental Organisations and distribution of Aid, The political environment, Political violence, and Internal re-location. These issues are considered to be particularly relevant to the consideration of asylum applications in the UK. We are seeking to interview a range of sources representing differing perspectives on the issues being considered. The information obtained may be published in a report and/ or used by immigration officials and by appeals courts to help inform decision-making on asylum and human rights applications in the UK.

Where possible, evidence of where the information you provide has been obtained would be helpful – e.g. through NGO/media reports, contacts with colleagues in the same or similar fields, or from your own experience of working in this area. Any relevant written documents or statistics on these issues would also be very helpful.

It would be extremely helpful if you would agree to be identified as the source of any information you provide. This could be on one of the following terms:

You agree that your identity may be revealed. This would mean your identity as the source of any information you provide would be in the public domain.

You agree that your identity may be revealed to the court, and to the lawyers and parties to the legal proceedings. It would not be disclosed publicly and we would seek to preserve your anonymity through a court order.

Alternatively, you may chose to remain anonymous, in which case you are assured that your identity will not be revealed to anyone outside the UK Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office. We will discuss the question of attribution with you during the interviews and will not disclose your identity to anyone else without your express permission. In addition we will discuss with you whether you are willing for us to pass on your contact details to the court and any lawyers in legal proceedings. If you agree that we may do this it will greatly increase the value of any information you provide but you should be aware that you may be contacted by lawyers who may ask you questions about the information you have provided to us.

We would like to express in advance our gratitude to you for agreeing to take part in this research. A list of the issues we will be seeking to obtain information upon is provided below.

Non-Governmental Organisations and distribution of Aid

1. Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

2. Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?
3. Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

The political environment

4. What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

Political violence

5. Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?
6. What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?
7. Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Internal re-location

8. Are there any practical, legal or other restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Annex B

LIST OF SOURCES INTERVIEWED BY THE DELEGATION

Sources interviewed by the delegation which were willing to be referenced included:

International

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

<http://www.icrc.org/>

The ICRC is an independent non-governmental organisation whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It has a permanent mandate founded in international law.

Zimbabwean non-government

Bulawayo Agenda

<http://www.bulawayoagenda.com/>

The Bulawayo Agenda is a national NGO that promotes open discussion of issues such as governance, democracy, rule of law, human rights and development. It also provides information on a range of topical issues.

Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe (CCJPZ)

CCJPZ is a Commission of the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference. The Commission is affiliated to the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace in Rome and has active contact with Commissions in other countries. Its main aim is in highlighting and assisting in cases of human rights abuse.

Commercial Farmers Union

The CFU has represented the commercial farming community of Zimbabwe for 67 years. The organisation's main focus is the promotion of productive and sustainable commercial agriculture in the country. The organisation supports farmers by providing technical support and acting as a collective interface with government and international donors.

Counselling Services Unit (CSU)

The CSU is a national NGO that provides medical and psychological care for victims of organised violence and torture. It also campaigns for the elimination of torture in Zimbabwe.

Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)

<http://www.galz.co.zw/>

GALZ is a national NGO that provides support and assistance to the LGBT community in Zimbabwe. It also campaigns for the attainment of full, equal rights and the removal of all forms of discrimination in all aspects of life for gay men, lesbians and bisexual people in Zimbabwe.

Research and Advocacy Unit

The Research and Advocacy organisation was set up in 2006 and is intended to produce better advocacy for human rights issues through better research. It is currently running three separate programmes looking at transitional justice, women and gender based violence, monitoring of research into elections, and the empowerment of victims of political violence.

Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum

www.hrforumzim.com

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum was founded in January 1998. It comprises twelve non-governmental organisations working in the field of human rights. It provides legal and psychosocial assistance to the victims organised violence and publishes regular and periodic human rights reports.

Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights (ZADHR)

www.zadhr.org

ZADHR campaigns for higher standards of health care provision for all Zimbabweans regardless of wealth/background. The organisation has lobbied the government for improvements and investigates violations of the right to health. It has also documented violations of the right to health.

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR)

<http://www.zlhr.org.zw/>

ZLHR is a human rights organisation whose core objective is to foster a culture of human rights in Zimbabwe as well as encourage the growth and strengthening of the observance of the rule of law. It holds observer status with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), and has affiliate status with the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ).

Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (Zim Rights)

www.zimrights.co.zw

ZimRights is a national NGO that uses a grassroots approach in promoting, protecting and defending Human Rights in Zimbabwe through education, information, legal aid, counselling, lobbying, advocacy and networking. The organisation works in a number of sectors, including: Advocacy and Civil Activism; Democracy & Good Governance; Gender; HIV/AIDS; Human Rights; Victim Support; Women, and Election Monitoring.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Annex C

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- BA – Bulawayo Agenda
- BPRA – Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association
- CAZ - Christian Alliance Zimbabwe
- CCJPZ – Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe
- CFU – Commercial Farmers Union
- CIO – Central Intelligence Organisation
- COPAC – Constitution Select Committee
- CSU – Counselling Services Unit
- CSO – Central Statistical Office
- FFM – Fact Finding Mission
- GALZ – Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe
- GoZ Government of Zimbabwe
- GNU – Government of National Unity
- GPA – Global Political Agreement
- ICJ – International Commission of Jurists
- ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross
- MDC – Movement for Democratic Change
- MDC-M – Movement for Democratic Change-Mutambara
- MDC-T – Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai
- NGO – Non-Government Organisation
- PISI – Police Internal Security Section
- POSA – Public Order and Security Act
- RAU – Research and Advocacy Unit
- SADC – Southern African Development Community
- UK – United Kingdom
- ZADHR – Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights
- ZANU-PF – Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
- ZimRights – Zimbabwe Human Rights Association
- ZLHR – Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights
- ZPF – ZANU-PF

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Annex D

INTERVIEW NOTES

Interview with: Zim Rights

Conducted by: Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 5 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

To an extent. We can get into the community but not as freely as we would like. There are still a lot of constraints.

If not, what constraints are placed on your organisation?

POSA for example. We also have to clear meetings with the authorities and go through local authorities as well such as Chiefs and Headmen. We have though managed to establish a good relationship with local people.

Who/what is responsible for these constraints and how does it affect your work?

See above.

Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

We are not an aid organisation so I am unable to comment specifically but it is clear that there is room for improvement. People are still starving in some areas. Distribution of food aid is still used as a political tool by Chiefs and Headmen.

What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

There has been an improvement in terms of the movement of people and freedom of association. There is better access to food, fuel etc. Dollarisation has stabilised the economy. But there is a lot that still needs to be improved. The main protagonists in the GNU, especially ZANU-PF, have not fulfilled many parts of the Global Political Agreement (GPA). ZANU-PF still maintains control over parts of the Government, and the army and police. The judiciary remains compromised and the problem of Tomana has not been solved. Mugabe continues to make appointments unilaterally without reference to the GNU. There are now a number of commissions in place, such as the anti-corruption commission, the election commission and the Zimbabwe Media Commission but their effect has been limited. The Zimbabwe Media Commission for example has not done anything to free up the electronic media. A recent example would be the use of ZANU-PF jingles on the radio. Radio is still used as a propaganda tool by ZANU-PF.

Is the local political environment freer or more restricted since the formation of the GNU?

The rural areas are still heavily politicised. ZANU-PF continue to use the army, police, youth militia and war veterans to intimidate. The constitution making process has been used by ZANU-PF to trigger violence in the communities. The patience of the Zimbabwean people appears though to be reaching an end. ZimRights recently published a document called "Article 7: values for healing". We thought people would have been afraid to voice an opinion, but people were happy to speak direct t6o a video camera about the issues – they were clearly not afraid.

Have supporters of all political parties been able to gather or protest without interference? What type of interference? Who?

In the rural areas people have not been turning up to the COPAC meetings simply because they don't want to hear from or about ZANU-PF any more. People don't want to be associated with them any more.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more politically open?

The urban areas are more politically open.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

The military is still in control and are responsible with the police for violence. The security sector needs to be reformed before we have another election or we will be playing into the hands of ZANU-PF.

What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?

The police are very partisan. The perpetrators of violence include the police and that is the responsibility of a handful of senior officers who do not want to see reform. However, many officers do not want to see violence and want a new Zimbabwe.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Yes. Violence is more common in Mashonaland, Midlands, Manicaland and Masvingo. These are all ex-ZANU-PF strongholds that ZANU-PF wants to win back from the MDC. They are doing this by cracking down on the people that they think made them lose.

If so, why? What makes a difference in this respect?

Is violence/repression more or less centred in urban or rural areas – or is there no difference?

The remotest parts of the rural areas are the most affected by violence but it is not uncommon in the urban areas, for example the riots in Epworth this year.

Are areas that strongly support ZANU-PF or the MDC more or less prone to violence towards the opposite group?

In Manicaland for example, and area lost by ZANU-PF in the last election, people have been beaten up and killed but people still know which way they want to vote. It will be very difficult for

ZANU-PF to regain control in those areas. As I mentioned before, the Zimbabwean people have lost their patience. 90% of Zimbabweans do not believe in violence. Internal political squabbling within the parties resulting in violence is also not uncommon. A recent incident within the MDC at Harvest House is an example.

Which areas – specific as possible?

What causes violence to occur in these areas (e.g. political meetings, party regalia worn)?

ZANU-PF believes in violence. To win an election they believe they need violence to force people into believing their propaganda. They see violence as a way to regaining lost constituencies. People who work in the Human Rights areas or who push HR issues are seen as enemies or opposition in political terms. Therefore anyone who interacts with these people is also a target. ZimRights members are often presumed to be MDC supporters. Also, resistance to participate in ZANU-PF activities is a key factor in violence – anyone who resists in this respect is also a target. Chief and Headmen are key. Most are partisan and perpetrate violence.

Details of specific incidents.

Violence caused by ZANU-PF during the constitution making process at Harare International Conference Centre. Riots in Epworth in March/April this year between MDC and ZANU-PF supporters. Internal political violence within ANU-PF in Mashonaland West in March/April this year.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

Not that I am aware of.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Anonymous – an anonymous organisation

Conducted by: Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 3 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

We are able to operate relatively freely at the moment but in effect, the situation has not changed as the potential still exists for harassment. In effect the organisation produces a newspaper for its Public Information Rights Forum members, which qualifies it to be exempt from the restrictive conditions of the AIPPA media law. But this does not eliminate the potential for the Government to close down the paper – and the organization – on the false and arbitrary grounds of allegedly breaking the media law. There is currently no clarity as to the rule of law thus people do not know if they are safe or not. A number of laws exist to undermine business activity and civil society. ZANU – PF continues to control the security and justice sectors.

If not, what constraints are placed on your organisation?

There are currently no physical constraints. But there have been and continue to be threats from the police. The police and CIO had in the past visited our offices but have not done so since the last elections. Two members of staff and 14 participants of an outreach meeting in Binga were detained for four days in May 2008. Lawyers attended and those arbitrarily detained were eventually released without charge. MMPZ recently conducted an outreach in Mutare involving 30 local participants, which was also attended by 5 plainclothes policemen. A number of the participants were afraid and did not participate as a result. However, the outreach was not prevented from taking place by the police. Earlier this year (2010) an outreach session was stopped by the local police. Three weeks before four or five plainclothes policemen and intelligence officers also attended an outreach session in Nyika.

Who/what is responsible for these constraints and how does it affect your work?

See above.

Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

Is aid getting to those most in need of it?

As long as aid gets to NGO's and International Organisations then it stands a better chance of getting to the people who need it. Much still depends on the allegiance of the local authorities in terms of allocation of some food aid.

Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

There have been reports of discrimination but the Agencies have been even handed with aid distribution. However, even they can be influenced at a local level by local authorities.

Does a person's actual or perceived political affiliation result in discrimination in the receipt of aid?

It often does. In ZPF areas to ensure aid is supplied it is not sufficient simply to prove that a person is not an MDC supporter but that they also demonstrate that they are an active ZANU – PF supporter.

Has there been any political manipulation of aid – either NGO or state provision?

In the case of manipulation in favour of ZANU-PF, it appears to have been influenced from the highest level and implemented at the local level where local government structures are still mainly under the control of ZPF.

What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

There is now less of a threat and the current environment is more difficult for ZANU-PF to operate in. However, as the GNU becomes older, ZPF is becoming more and more emboldened. As ZPF becomes more confident and stronger, it is beginning to revert back to the situation before the GNU was formed. There is now more overt activity in contravention of the spirit of the GNU, such as ZPF mobilisation of supporters, corruption of the COPAC process etc. Harassment of MDC supporters continues. The potential still exists for a reversion to previous violence. The elections of 2005 for example were only less violent due to the memory of the event of 2002.

Is the local political environment freer or more restricted since the formation of the GNU?

Have supporters of all political parties been able to gather or protest without interference? What type of interference? Who?

The police recently refused the MDC-T to hold a rally in Hwange recently, but the party, led by the country's Prime Minister, Morgan Tsvangirai, held the rally anyway and there was no interference. Although some forms of media reported this, it was not covered in the state media. Therefore a proportion of the population are unaware of these issues. However, other public events organized by less high profile political figures and civic activist organizations have been disrupted or prevented from going ahead by the police. A lack of clear MDC media strategy to advertise such issues and the party's failure to assert itself as an equal partner in the coalition government is leading to a more cynical view towards the GNU – and the MDC.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more politically open?

Harare is more politically open than the rural areas. Areas that were strongly contested during the last election and where majorities are slim are still battlegrounds in political terms. For example, Bindura, which is an ex ZANUP-PF stronghold, now MDC, and where MDC members have been charged with offences, beaten and locked up as part of a campaign of intimidation. Buhera is another example. ZANUP-PF is also now fighting back in urban areas where the MDC has the majority, by undermining MDC councils. The fact that the MDC have to be seen to answerable gives ZPF an advantage.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

Political violence is constantly present in all parts of the country. Only this week media reports indicate a large increase in the number of political violence incidents. 18 new incidents were reported this week, with 11 of those connected with COPAC's outreach activities. The Government has only reported 3, none in relation to the COPAC outreach.

What have been the main reasons for recent political violence?

Inter-party violence.

Who are the perpetrators of violence?

The main offenders are reported to be ZANU PF youth militia (National Youth Service), "ZANU PF supporters", security agents (from within the intelligence services [CIO and PISI]) and military figures (mainly the army).

What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?

Effectively the police do nothing to protect victims of political persecution by ignoring it. They are at times complicit in identifying potential victims and on some occasions they take part in the persecution itself but in general they prefer to ignore it. However, there are a number of professionally trained officers in the force who do not want to take part in it. Many would also prefer to leave this to the CIO or militia. But many do not have an alternative in a country with such high unemployment.

How do the police identify particular targets for persecution?

Civil society's activities in Zimbabwe are very open, so identifying targets would be straightforward. Traditional leadership structures such as chiefs and headmen are extensively used in rural communities. Informants in rural areas are also used.

Are the police active or reactive to political events?

In general the police prefer to avoid political issues and they are not usually the source of political violence. But they are forced to take action against political activists (arrests and detentions etc) on the instructions of politicians and senior operatives in the uniformed services.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Yes – more seriously contested areas are still political battlegrounds, as stated previously, such as: Mashonaland North, Manicaland, Midlands, Masvingo provinces and in localities such as Bindura, Chiredzi, Buhera etc There also exists some degree of intimidation in ZANU-PF strongholds.

If so, why? What makes a difference in this respect?

Areas where the votes were closest in the last election – and the need for ZANU PF to regain lost loyalty.

Is violence/repression more or less centred in urban or rural areas – or is there no difference?

It is generally more prevalent in rural communities and politically disputed small regional urban centres, such as Bindura and other small towns.

Are areas that strongly support ZANU-PF or the MDC more or less prone to violence towards the opposite group?

Which areas – specific as possible?

What causes violence to occur in these areas (e.g. political meetings, party regalia worn)?

Details of specific incidents.

Arrest on often false charges of MDC MPs and other activist political and CSO figures. Recent examples occurred in Chipinge East, Chimanimani West and Gutu East. A common charge is abusing agricultural inputs in 2007. 7 MDC and 1 ZPF were arrested in 2009 for this offence. All were from Masvingo and Manicaland. With regard to the causes of political violence, yes, political meetings and the wearing of party regalia do often lead to violence, almost invariably where the MDC attempt to operate in politically disputed areas. But the use of psychological violence – threats and intimidation – is also frequently used to influence (and terrorize) vulnerable populations (especially in the rural areas). Examples are often made in local communities to illustrate the consequences of defiance.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

There are no legal restrictions but many find that they are vulnerable if they move to rural areas. After “Operation Murambatsvina” in 2005 to destroy and punish the MDC’s urban support-base, many people were forced into rural areas and were treated as outcasts. However, rural communities in Zimbabwe are close knit and local headmen and/or CIO officers will want to know where a person has come from. It is generally unheard of for people to move to areas where they have no connection. A small number of people may move to a rural area new to them if that is part of the requirements of an existing job for example, but with the current rate of unemployment this is rare. Rural areas are more tense in terms of political affiliation. Questions would be asked of those returning from overseas. The United Kingdom is the least popular country in terms of the reputation it has through state media.

Is there any requirement to officially register in a new area – if so with whom? If so, how is this enforced?

There is no legal requirement to register in a new area.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Research and Advocacy Unit

Conducted by: Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare and Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA

Interview date: 17 August 2010

Overview of organisation and activities

The Research and Advocacy organisation was set up in 2006 and is intended to produce better advocacy for human rights issues through better research. It is currently running three separate programmes:

1. Transitional justice programme which is aimed at those displaced such as farm workers. It also looks at women and gender based violence, having completed a survey in January on women and political violence with special emphasis on political rape.
2. Monitoring of and research into elections.
3. The Tree of Life Project dealing with healing and empowerment issues for victims of political violence (who are also trained to act as facilitators).

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

Yes, although there have been a certain amount of problems for our partners. We have not had any issues with the authorities, although before the 2008 elections we were visited by the police Internal Security Section (PISI). The visit came to nothing.

What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

I do not believe that ZANU-PF in any way believes in the Government of National Unity (GNU). The GNU simply serves to give the party some breathing space to prepare for the next elections. It is effectively an unimplementable agreement. However, inflation has stopped, and the economy has now stabilised, but this has left the poor who worked in the informal sector and cross border trade in a worse situation with regards to a dollar economy. There have therefore been some good and bad consequences.

Is the local political environment freer or more restricted since the formation of the GNU? Have supporters of all political parties been able to gather or protest without interference? What type of interference? Who?

This has been a honeymoon period. Now the Constitution making process has begun, the political space is closing down dramatically. There are increasing reports of political violence and intimidation. RAU is currently researching communities where militia bases exist and looking at Northern Zimbabwe where the violence was worse in 2008. We are looking at what was in place in 2008 where there were multiple bases which explicitly targeted MDC and non-participating voters. There is evidence that the Government has placed "environment officers", who are ex-militia members, in schools to ensure co-operation. Land redistribution has resulted in 127,000 families resettled. They are controlled as ZANU-PF supporters through the allocation of land without land rights. They can therefore be evicted at any time.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more politically open?

In the last voter survey, conducted by RAU in December 2009, 9% said they would vote ZANU-PF and 51% for MDC.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

ZANU-PF is currently putting its campaigning strategy in place. They are identifying areas for bases to open up and recruiting youth to re-deploy in January. There is evidence they will be receiving training from the army. Some bases will be used again and again, and others will be set up anew. Much of this depends on scrutiny of community areas by NGO's and International Organisations. RAU has established this through contacts in the communities and looks for hard physical evidence. One constituency monitored had 5 bases. In other areas the bases will rotate – being in existence for only a week or two, then moving on to another area. There is no strong evidence of bases in urban area, although Epworth did have a base in 2008. Rural districts can become no-go areas in the election run-up, and visitors to an area will be closely monitored. In urban areas, retaliation violence is not uncommon. Some MDC communities have developed a strategy where all members carry a whistle to attract other members if there is violence so the community can protect themselves.

What recent examples do you have (Nature and frequency of incidents)? (Also profiles of victims of violence – why are these people targeted?)

In terms of profiles, the risk would be as follows:

1. Office bearer in MDC/polling agent during elections.
2. Members of MDC (known or discovered).
3. Suspected MDC members (and possible to discover membership).
4. Those linked with NGO's, Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network.

To this list should also be added persons that do not demonstrate 'positive affiliation' to ZANU-PF: this is especially important in the rural areas and during elections.

In a survey conducted by RAU in 2009, out of a sample of 2,200 women, over 50% reported experiences of political violence. 2% reported political rape and 14% knew someone who had been raped for political reasons.

**What have been the main reasons for recent political violence?
Who are the perpetrators of violence?**

In order of involvement in political violence:

1. ZANU-PF supporters.
2. ZANU-PF youth.
3. Youth militia.
4. War veterans.
5. Police.
6. Army (since 2000 a greater involvement of the army in rural violence).
7. CIO (very low involvement in actual violence)

There is a large pool of youth in the rural areas that ZANU-PF can draw upon in terms of recruitment for the militia. Many youth militia go on to join the police or army, which both have a high attrition rate, in particular due to HIV/AIDS related deaths. Their ages are variable. They

can be very young but also in their 20s or 30s. The majority are between 16 and 30. They are the highest unemployed group in Zimbabwe and are therefore susceptible to bribes etc. We are already seeing signs of preparation for an election. There are a surprisingly high number of female ZANU-PF perpetrators.

Are the police able to operate independently?

A small number of police are trying to do their job professionally, but they don't last very long.

Are police in some areas more partisan than in other areas?

The role of the police in rural areas is to prevent political violence from being discovered.

Are the police partisan in their response to political violence and persecution?

In general they will not prosecute people reported as perpetrators of political violence. They apply legislation in an inappropriate way (POSA for example). They are increasingly involved in violence.

How do the police identify particular targets for persecution?

They share information with other parts of the security sector.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Rural areas are more affected. ZANU-PF are massively outnumbered in the urban areas but there is violence in the per-urban areas such as Epworth in Harare. In the urban areas ZANU-PF would use the army for political violence.

Are areas that strongly support ZANU-PF or the MDC more or less prone to violence towards the opposite group?

Mashonaland East, West and Central are all ZANU-PF areas which have high levels of violence. Also areas of Masvingo, Manicaland and Midlands experience violence.

Other areas which have not experienced the same levels of violence are for example Matabeleland North and South. ZANU-PF has not won a seat in these areas since the 1980s. Intimidation can still be high in those areas though. ZANU-PF will contest areas where the MDC won seats in 2008. In 2005, all violence was targeted at MDC areas (although predominantly the rural areas).

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

If a person were to move from a rural area to an urban one, relocation would be easy. Moving back to a rural area from urban would make a person highly visible. A person coming back from overseas could lie about where they had been but would have to quickly learn ZANU-PF systems of identification in the rural areas to be accepted (i.e. responses to political slogans etc). The majority of Ndebele will find it difficult going back to Shona areas (for example Mashonaland).

There is a Shona presence in Matabeleland, and many Ndebele speak Shona. In Bulawayo, about 80% are Ndebele but many of the businessmen and Government posts are Shona. There was a large movement of Shona to Matabeleland in the 1980s and into the 1990s. There is a certain amount of ethnic tension due to this. The majority of Ndebele over Shona in part of the country is diminishing. Large numbers of the Ndebele youth are migrating to South Africa. The proportion of elderly in the rural areas is increasing.

Is there any requirement to officially register in a new area – if so with whom? If so, how is this enforced?

It can be difficult however in terms of where a person is registered to vote. It is difficult to change the area a person is registered to and they may therefore have to return to a rural area to vote. The Registrar General's Department requires a large amount of documentation to alter a person's voter registration area.

Is there any differentiation in restrictions, depending on area? If so, where?

During elections movement in rural areas is tightly controlled, particularly in Mashonaland.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 17 August 2010

1. GALZ has a resource centre in Milton Park in Harare. They work well with the local police in Milton Park. There was a raid on the GALZ offices in May 2010 by Harare Central Police and the Source's home was searched at the same time. The Source was not at his home at the time but the police harassed the people who were there. No-one was hurt. GALZ attributes these raids to their active involvement in the constitutional outreach programme.

2. It is difficult for gay men to access health services including STI and HIV/AIDS treatment in public health facilities. This is believed to be because the service providers are intimidated by the attitudes of the President to homosexuality. This is not a problem for middle class gay men as the middle classes generally use private healthcare where there is no such discrimination.

4. In the early days of the GNU a lot of political space opened up for GALZ and they enjoyed good access to senior politicians. They feel, however, that the space is closing down again and they no longer enjoy such good access. They believe this is partly due to the constitutional process but also that the MDC seems less interested in human rights than they were before the GNU formation.

Bulawayo is more open and tolerant and has a very different atmosphere from Harare. People in Bulawayo are more politically active and willing to push for their rights. There is a gay nightclub in the middle of town. GALZ thinks this different attitude may be related to proximity to South Africa.

More generally, freedom of expression is still closed - people do not feel able to speak freely.

The situation for gay men

It is possible for a man to be openly gay in Zimbabwe. In high density areas openly gay men may face taunting and harassment and may also face discrimination in the provision of services on account of their sexuality. The situation is more permissive in middle class areas, where gay men enjoy respect as they are generally successful. Levels of tolerance of gay men and understanding of LGBT issues has generally increased among the public.

The situation for lesbians

The situation is much more difficult for lesbians and hasn't really improved significantly. It is very difficult for lesbians to 'come out' and those that do risk harassment and worse, ranging from taunts such as 'you just haven't found a good man yet' to rape. It has also been difficult for women to participate fully in GALZ in the past because it was dominated by men, although lesbians now command more respect within the organisation. All this has meant that the number of lesbians who are 'out' is much lower than the number of gay men.

Most of the harassment and the cases of rape of which GALZ is aware have taken place in the high density areas. For women who have been raped, shame often prevents them from reporting the crime to the police and if they do, the police are often reluctant to act. This means that for lesbians who are raped, counselling may be the best that they can hope for.

GALZ is not aware of any active police persecution of lesbians nor of any cases of lesbians being detained, but there is a lack of police protection.

6. Gay rights activists may be targeted by the police, CIO and CID. This will generally be in the form of harassment - these agencies will typically approach an activist and try to impart a sense of fear that what they are doing is wrong, is not acceptable and they shouldn't be encouraging others. There have been isolated cases of arbitrary arrest of gay men and gay rights activists and searches of their properties and person, often in an attempt to find such things as membership lists. Detention following such arrests tends not to be for very long - when it hears of such cases GALZ works with Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights. The longest that a GALZ activist has been detained is for 6 days. Ordinary gay men are as far as GALZ is aware never detained for longer than 48 hours. GALZ is not aware of any incidents of official violence against gay men since the formation of the GNU.

GALZ attributes the police attitude to a misunderstanding of GALZ's role - they sometimes think it is an underground organisation and have suggested that it is used as a channel by the UK and USA. Much also depends on what the President has said - he hasn't made any anti-gay comments recently but had not distanced himself from comments made in the past.

GALZ has recently enjoyed a 'surprising' degree of support from other civil society organisations and GALZ thinks this may also have focused more attention on them.

8. It would be harder for a gay man to reintegrate into a new area than it would be for a heterosexual man. The tolerance comes from familiarity and people are more tolerant of members of their own community.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 12 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

Freedom depends on the area and the project. Less politically sensitive projects, for instance training on HIV care, are not restricted or monitored in any areas. However, more sensitive projects, like the current Post Trauma needs assessment, have faced opposition in some areas from local administrators. This has happened particularly in Masvingo and Mashonaland East and Central where focus groups have met with resistance from the District Administrator. This project is seeking to establish the impact of the last eight years of violence and had originally planned to take samples of healthcare professionals from around Zimbabwe. However, resistance has meant that only certain areas could be visited; areas with high levels of Zanu PF control were more restrictive than others.

Masvingo and Mashonaland East and Central have been particularly difficult to access in order to conduct surveys and local administrators have monitored meetings in these areas, although there has been no action taken by the authorities in these areas. Some health professionals asked to take part in the focus groups and meetings have been warned not to attend by local authorities in Mashonaland East and Central, and this has sometimes resulted in lower attendance. However, ZADHR is not aware of any reprisals for those who attended despite warnings.

An amenable local administrator or chief will offer help.

Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

The distribution of aid appears to have improved since 2008, although there is still interference from local authorities who attempt to influence NGOs to distribute aid according to their lists. There is some resistance from NGOs, but the source was unclear as to how successful that was. The local authority list is made on political grounds, rather than a needs assessment.

What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

Since 2008, there has been some opening of restricted space in most areas of Zimbabwe. Some aid agencies feel limited by local interference, but are still able to travel with less restrictions than in 2008. Local authorities will check on the organisation if they think their operation is going 'too well'.

There has been a limited change in the media – there are now two daily newspapers available but there is still a state owned monopoly of broadcast media with a Zanu PF bias which sometimes bordered on hate speech.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

There has been no overall change in political violence in the last eight years, and fluctuating levels have followed the same pattern of increase around elections, with a dip in the years between. The current lower levels of violence are normal for a time between elections, and although they are much lower than in 2008, this is to be expected. Violence is at a low level but is still occurring, with a high level of verbal violence and intimidation directed towards known political activists, for instance party secretaries. However, there has also been some intimidation of workshop participants (as discussed earlier) and this does not seem to have a political basis – those without a political profile can be also threatened for their links to the organisation.

There are reports that preparations are taking place for upcoming elections, although there is no indication of a date being set by the GNU. The organisation has heard that ‘bases’ are being set up in a similar way to those set up in 2008.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Mashonaland East and Central, North Manicaland and border areas between Midlands, Masvingo and Manicaland have higher levels of violence than other areas, with low levels reported in Matabeleland.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

Migration between rural areas is very difficult – the Chief of the new area has to be informed why you are moving and will then allocate land. Those who are politically active will find it even more difficult as the Chiefs are normally associated with Zanu PF. Moving to urban areas from rural areas is easier, as long as migrants have the necessary funds to find accommodation. The only constraint on moving to an urban area is economic. There may be questions asked upon return to the home area.

Those returning from overseas to rural areas will, in general, not face problems if they still have family members living there. People are more concerned with current activity rather than past events, and although questions are asked about returnees in rural areas, there is usually no sinister basis for this and those who do not participate in political activity on return will not have any additional problems when compared with other residents.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 12 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

We have been able to work fairly normally, some activities have invited interference in the form of monitoring meetings; however, there have been no disruptions. There has been some interference from state agents trying to find out about our activities but that has not really affected operations. On a general level, the government's NGO bill continues to be a threat as the possibility of it being reintroduced by Parliament remains and the government's provincial policies in relation to the work of humanitarian and human rights NGOs can cause some difficulties.

Lawyers have been arrested in 2009 but not 2010. There was a physical threat against a ZLHR Project lawyer working in Mutare in 2010. The lawyer was forced to leave Mutare for a few days but returned for the court hearing. In May 2010, a lawyer working to free a GALZ activist was threatened with arrest in Harare Central police station and similar threats have been issued from time to time. Malicious prosecutions of lawyers representing human rights defenders continue, as lawyers are often associated with the cause of their client/s. This presents some challenges in defending human rights defenders and providing legal support services.

What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

It has been a variable situation. When the government is running smoothly, civil society has been left alone but at times of tensions within the government there has been increased targeting of civil society and political figures. After the GNU formed there were less overt attacks, however following MDC disengagement there were attempted abductions on civil society activists and human rights defenders were imprisoned.

With the advent of the constitutional outreach programme, led by Parliament, violence has surfaced again in a number of provinces. Meetings regarding the Constitution Outreach have had to be cancelled in some areas due to intimidation, disruptions and monitoring – the pattern for this follows that of the general violence. There have also been cases of post-outreach meeting retribution against those community members who have expressed individual opinions in the meetings.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

The constitution outreach programme has led to an increase in violence, although this mostly takes the form of verbal violence, intimidation and threatening behaviour. However, actual violence may follow for those who speak out at meetings.

Due to the continued failure by the police and prosecutorial authorities to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of electoral-related violence and other human rights violations, the

culture of impunity remains entrenched and some citizens resort to self-help in desperation. MDC members who attempt to reclaim property taken in 2008 face being victimised through the use of malicious arrests and prosecution for “extortion” or “theft”.

Those who are more politically active are more likely to be attacked, for example MDC councillors or people who have positions in MDC structures, however the nature of violence depends on the area and the perpetrator of the violence.

What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?

The police have not changed since 2008. They do not investigate claims of violence and they do not arrest the accused. There have been a handful of events that have been investigated, but this is very much the exception and is generally reserved for non-political crimes. Police are not well trained and there has been a complete resistance to human rights training which is called for in the Global Political Agreement.

Higher ranks in the Attorney General's office have halted prosecutions in the past for political reasons, or have prosecuted maliciously and selectively in the case of targeted human rights defenders. Where dossiers and evidence identifying perpetrators and linking them to crimes has been provided to the Attorney General, he has refused to prosecute and has instead targeted the individuals and institutions which have provided the information.

The Law and Order Unit is the main culprit in violations. Police, on instructions “from above” give instructions to the AG's office and determine who is prosecuted, even insisting on proceeding with cases where prosecutors have given advice that no case can be sustained. More than 300 people released on bail have had their bail revoked through the invocation of section 121 of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act – which suspends bail for 7 days to give the state time to file an appeal. In almost all cases, an appeal is never filed, or is filed and dismissed, reinforcing the argument that s121 is being used to persecute human rights defenders.

Teachers, politicians, lawyers and members of the Zimbabwean Electoral Commission have had charges dating from between 2005 and 2008 reviewed and they have been summoned back to court as an intimidatory tactic and to hamper their ordinary work and activities.

The police in Bulawayo are better than in Harare, although they are also known to act arbitrarily.

There is generally no real pattern to police targeting. Clearly some are individuals who have annoyed them or at the behest of ZANU-PF politicians, but sometimes it is not possible to ascertain any method or reason. However, where certain individuals or sectors are targeted there is clearly a lot of strategising and groundwork which is undertaken in the targeting.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Mashonaland East, Central and West, Manicaland and Masvingo all have a higher incidence of violence than other areas. Midlands province has had some sporadic violence.

Mashonaland is a 'no-go' area for MDC supporters as it remains a ZANU-PF stronghold, and they face harassment and arrests.

Masvingo and Manicaland have seen some retaliation by MDC members against perpetrators of the 2008 violence and intimidation linked to the manner in which people voted in the 2008 elections and the retribution they suffered.

In general, violence is concentrated in rural areas and high density suburbs of Harare, such as Epworth and Mbare, where policing has always been heavy handed. High density urban areas experience occasional arrests and beatings. Bulawayo has occasional incidents.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

Relocation to rural areas is very difficult as there is no land available to be allocated to new arrivals without the authority of the chief in that specific area. Movement to urban areas is possible but economic reasons prevent people being able to pay for accommodation. Employment prospects will affect where people migrate to. Culturally, moving between rural areas is not common; those who move to a new rural area are likely to arouse suspicion as members of the community are well-known and outsiders are easily identified and targeted by those who remain suspicious about why they have moved to that area.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Counselling Services Unit

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 12 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

The organisation is currently able to operate freely with no constraints on its activities.

Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

Aid organisations were able to operate much more freely immediately after the formation of the Government of National Unity. But the environment has become more restrictive of late, particularly in the rural areas. Local Chiefs are increasingly regaining control of their areas. Everything has to be done through local ZANU-PF structures who will use lists to manage the distribution of aid.

Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

There are regional variations in the extent to which this interferes with the distribution of aid. Mashonaland Central and East are 'dreadful'. Manicaland and Mashonaland West are 'difficult', the latter because of a leadership struggle within ZANU-PF. Political manipulation of aid is not however limited to one side and in areas which it has more control the MDC will also try to restrict access to aid for those who are not supporters. Access to educational support for orphans has been limited for non-ZANU orphans.

The situation in urban areas is different. Probably owing to the concentration of population which makes service delivery easier, and the fact that need may be less need for aid distribution because most urban people have some means of getting income (although even to achieve as e.g. a street vendor selling tomatoes, it is often necessary to have a ZANU-PF membership card). There is constant harassment of the informal sector, and in the last week there has been destruction of vendors property in Manicaland and forced displacement of homeless people again in Harare. Their informal shacks were torched by police this week and they were arrested (over 150 people).

Much politicisation of services is at a strategic level rather than in the delivery of frontline services. So for example, senior officials or politicians in ministries may block projects for political reasons. There is also corruption and there appear to be increasing incidences of low level officials blocking projects to extract bribes.

Not all shortcomings in service are down to politicisation but rather to lack of capacity – there simply are not enough professionals with the necessary skills to implement projects. An example was given of a US\$100 million grant to a ministry of which only US\$20 million has been spent because there was not the professional capacity to implement more. The great difficulty is that until the infrastructure improves sufficiently so that there are enough good schools and adequate healthcare, the professionals who have left Zimbabwe to pursue careers elsewhere will not be attracted back. In Harare the infrastructure is now improved so that e.g.

electricity supplies are much more reliable and there is intermittent municipal water, but there is little improvement in smaller urban and rural areas.

What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

ZANU-PF is currently fighting very hard to gain political space and is using the Constitution Outreach Programme process to test that space and its structures. There is increasing militarization of rural areas and the Youth Militias that were established in bases in such areas ahead of the 2008 elections remain on the government payroll. There is increasing incidence of senior soldiers being deployed to rural areas out of uniform to further bolster ZANU-PF control. There is not however a lot of popular support for ZANU-PF.

Real power lies with the senior military (JOC), with Robert Mugabe as the political front. The military are very aware of the regional pressure to maintain a civilian government, but have developed a powerful structure of control of the political party. At present Robert Mugabe retains control over all critical decisions, but if one wants to know what is happening in the political sphere one should watch the Joint Operational Command (JOC).

The Source expects ZANU-PF to call a snap election in the coming months – when precisely will be clearer after the August 2010 SADC summit and again it will be the JOC that calls the shots. The Source considers that both ZANU-PF and the military are desperate for political legitimacy. They are also very aware of the intense regional pressures to form a civilian government and are keen to rebuild their reputation in the region and with the west, not least because they feel that the relationship with China is not going to be a comfortable one. Interestingly the SADC summit delivered another 30 day deadline, with no defined commencement date, and there is very little evidence of any compliance with resolution of the 3 toxic or 24 administrative issues outstanding. (We hear that the political life of Zuma may be cut short in the near future).

They will therefore seek to rely as far as possible on measures short of large-scale political violence in the election campaign and believe that they can achieve a clear majority without needing to resort to large-scale violence. Instead they will seek to exploit the deep divisions in the MDC, which is close to fracturing into two distinct factions, led by Makoni and Biti, with the former keeping Tsvangirai as a front. Each faction already has its own nationwide political machine but a fracture along these lines would nonetheless be disastrous for MDC's prospects in the election. Neither have regional powers been impressed by MDC's performance and in particular its failure to reach out and form regional alliances, which will increase ZANU-PF's confidence that a legitimately elected ZANU-PF government would be acceptable.

A further factor will be that ZANU-PF were afraid after the 2008 election violence that they were going to be indicted by the International Criminal Court and will want at all costs to avoid increasing that risk. There will still be intimidation, as already seen in respect of the COPAC process, but they will try to suppress large-scale pre- and post election political violence, although that will remain in their armoury if it looks like they are going to lose the election.

If ZANU-PF does achieve a legitimate election victory the Source expects that the political space in Zimbabwe will open up considerably and there will be much less pressure on political activists.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

Much of the political violence that has been recorded this year is 'baseline' violence, for example pub brawls between competing factions. There have also been several incidents of soldiers 'getting out of line' and attacking people. In every such case the soldiers concerned have been disciplined. There has been relatively little structural violence this year i.e. systematic violence inspired or orchestrated by the higher echelons of ZANU-PF.

Apart from incidents such as bar-room brawls, political violence is carefully targeted against those who have some sort of political profile. Not necessarily particularly high level, but perhaps Ward representatives or organisers, or local party officials. Only those who are on ZANU-PF or CIO lists will be targeted and they would not be interested in people who are merely MDC supporters who are not active in some way. That has always been the case, stretching back to 2002. In the violence that attended the 2008 elections, 80% of the victims of such violence were known to have had a role in the electoral process above and beyond that of merely being opposition supporters. Most of the abductions and executions were at the hands of a death squad and took place on four particular days period with the victims being clearly targeted for their political effectiveness rather than random killings.

What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?

Police performance is a mixed bag. They will react to and investigate some allegations of political violence although they tend to take action mainly where the political structure which is under investigation is falling out of favour. Police are at least generally co-operative with the Source now, but still tend where farm/land issues are concerned to side firmly with the local party structures. There has been an interesting undercurrent developing among the police of resistance to ZANU-PF but the Source expects that to be reversed now that the political structure has access to diamonds and therefore can reassert its control through economic means.

Torture – in the form of beatings - by police is a routine part of their criminal investigation procedures and is not necessarily linked to politics. Political activists who are targeted by Military Intelligence and the CIO are likely to be tortured and these organisations used a wide range of more 'sophisticated' methods including e.g. waterboarding.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Regional variations in political violence and intimidation are still virtually identical to those in 2008. The Source has provided a map which is appended to this report which shows the patterns of violence then, and where it is likely to happen in the future is political violence does re-emerge on a large scale. The Source added Epworth and the high density suburbs to the south of Harare to the usual list of political violence hotspots. On the whole the political violence in these parts of Harare tend to be brawls, often fuelled by alcohol, between competing factions, in some cases recently linked to loyalties to different candidates for the post of provincial governor. People who take no active part in politics or who do not join the gangs are unlikely to be involved in such violence. It would in any case be impossible for someone who was not able to demonstrate loyalty to the particular faction controlling an area to live in that area.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

It is not possible to leave or settle in most rural areas without the agreement of the ZANU-PF area commander who might be the Chief, the head of Youth Militia or anyone else with the most

influence locally. The Source explained that in the traditional rural social structures such decisions would not in any case happen without discussion within the community and the wider community. On the other hand, the need is to know, not necessarily to prevent. Although the need to explain applies also in MDC dominated areas, where there will still be a ZANU-PF structure, Matabeleland is an exception because it traditionally has a high migrant population.

It is not possible to move in and out of rural areas without permission from the local village head, who is also the ZANU village chairman. Movement is monitored and questioned by the local militia structures, and people are fined if explanations are not satisfactory. Migration decisions are made by family structures.

In the time before visas were introduced for Zimbabwean visitors it was the aim of every family to have one family member in the UK and one in South Africa to send back remittances which have always been an extremely important part of the rural economy. That remains an ambition but one that is achievable by fewer people since the introduction of the visa regime.

Matabeleland traditionally has a higher migrant population.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: International Committee of the Red Cross

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 12 August 2010

Could you let us know whether ICRC are able to operate freely in all areas of Zimbabwe? If not, which areas are more difficult to access, and who makes access difficult?

We face currently no difficulty operating wherever we choose in the country and were also not touched by the 2008 ban that affected other international organisations and the NGOs: As indicated we have been here off and on since 1959 and constantly since 75. In one way or another we have met many of those who are today in power and they have benefited from our work. As a result we are probably slightly seen less as irritating, interfering outsiders.

There is no doubt that on the economic level the situation has improved considerably since the formation of the GNU. Even one year ago it was still difficult to buy goods in supermarkets in some areas. Things are generally better now but there is still not enough money in the economy and the situation for many is far from comfortable. Food production is much higher now than it was in two years ago although problems with the harvest mean this year's will be lower. This may be offset to some extent by the fact that the government has more money to import food from neighbours, though still not enough and 1.7million are expected to need food aid.

Are you currently aware of any discrimination regarding the provision of aid? If so, on what basis are people discriminated against?

There are sporadic but regularly recurrent reports of interference by authorities at local or provincial level in the aid attribution process: Sometimes these are clearly attempts to make sure the aid gets to the 'politically correct' beneficiaries as seen by the concerned authority. At other times it may be linked to traditional authorities (chiefs) feeling their authority is being undermined by NGOs not including their advice or following their direction. Our own relief operations in 2008 and 2009 have not been affected by this.

The political situation is not really going anywhere at the moment and no-one knows where it will end up. There is some surprise that the GNU is still holding together but initial deep pessimism has proved to be unfounded and this can mainly be attributed to a very positive attitude from those in MDC and Zanu PF who wish to move the country forward. The Source expects a very difficult time when the GNU ends as it must, either because of elections or the death of the President, without whom it cannot survive. The worst case scenario, but a very possible one, is that Mugabe dies suddenly and the military attempts to seize power. If that happened they would probably succeed in the short term – there is little to stop them domestically – but they would eventually be ended by regional pressure from the SADC.

It is the Source's opinion that the elections will probably not take place before 2012 for a variety of mostly practical reasons including both main parties' lack of resources to fund a campaign and the need to get the constitutional referendum out of the way.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

Political violence persists at the local level. At the top there is a veneer of opposition to political violence and Mugabe himself has even made statements discouraging such violence. But these are words, nothing is ever done in fact, and it is known that perpetrators can act with impunity. There is undoubtedly violence occurring in relation to the Constitutional Outreach process and in some areas that process has been halted because of concerns about levels of violence. However, it is the source's opinion that ZANU-PF has taken an active decision not to unleash the full force of political violence in relation to the constitutional referendum, not least because to have done so would have infuriated the South Africans during the soccer world cup.

It is extremely difficult to gauge the actual levels of current political violence because of an absence of reliable information. This means that the same information tends to circulate continually and is often uncorroborated. Thus, what was in fact one incident comes to be reported as two separate ones, and motives and outcomes can become confused. It has still not even been possible to ascertain how many MDC supporters were really 'disappeared' in 2008, even though the MDC is now in government and presumably has the capacity to undertake the work.

The source gave an example of a reports circulating in civil society of a political incident in which someone's house was burned down. When the source actually sent someone to investigate, it turned out to be the culmination of a long running neighbourly dispute, as confirmed by the 'victim' but there was still reluctance to admit this. This leads to an overstatement of actual levels of violence and has sometimes led to a situation where people talk about the current situation as though it is in some ways similar to 2008 when in fact there is no comparison.

However, although the source believes that current levels of actual political violence may be lower than reported, there is great potential for levels to increase to, or even to exceed 2008 levels when the elections come round, and predicts that it will be a very difficult time.

Are the police able to operate independently?

There is no doubt that the machinery of repression is still in place. Its origins can be traced back to before independence and it is an extremely effective machine with tentacles that reach all parts of government. Although it supposed to have been abolished the Joint Operational Command still exists in fact and still controls things. Some police try to uphold the law but they face intense pressure and most are loyal, even if secretly reluctantly, to their political masters.

There are some determinedly independent judges in the High Court in particular, whose courage is remarkable. But the trouble is that although they will where appropriate make orders e.g. for farm invaders to leave, those orders will not be enacted by the police if they run contrary to the wishes of ZANU-PF.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Current and future political violence will follow very closely the geographic distribution of the violence in 2008, concentrated in Mashonaland Central and East, Manicaland and Masvingo. That is because it is targeted at areas which were previously ZANU-PF strongholds but where they lost ground to the MDC, in an attempt to regain that ground. Targets will primarily be

political activists and former ZANU-PF voters who defected to the MDC. Matabeleland on the other hand is reasonably OK.

The source considered that a factor to take into account is that if there is a large scale resurgence of xenophobic violence in South Africa, possibly around the local elections there in spring 2011, that it could lead to a massive reflux of many of the estimated 3 million Zimbabweans in South Africa, which could have enormous consequences in Zimbabwe.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Anonymous – ‘an organisation in Zimbabwe’

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 11 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

The organisation could operate freely throughout Zimbabwe, and the environment had improved over the last 18 months, although much of the improvement was in the first year following the GNU. It is generally able to interact freely with the Government of Zimbabwe, NGOs, civil society, opposition politicians etc. This organisation keeps a low profile in order to better serve the people of Zimbabwe and avoid putting the beneficiary population at risk.

There are still some constraints on operations. Community based planning projects are seen as mobilising the community and therefore as a political action. Before the GNU, the projects would not have been possible. Now, however, the Zimbabwean authorities are now more willing and even pro-active in allowing people to participate; although in some cases government officials still see the projects as taking power from the government and allowing the population to develop ideas that may counter government policies or initiatives.

There are sometimes directives from local officials to stop working; however, this is in limited cases, and most of the time, the organisation can overcome this through negotiation. There are still districts where access is not granted, but these are few and access constraints typically affect individual communities or small geographical areas. Some quarters of the GNU, particularly ZANU-PF aligned elements, speculate that the organisation (and many other humanitarian actors) is biased towards MDC; however, the organisation is keen to maintain a reputation for neutrality.

Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

The organisation was not aware of political discrimination in delivery of aid, and noted that in cities, aid is increasingly delivered not to individuals, but to organisation such as hospitals and schools, making discrimination against individuals more difficult. The organisation delivers aid according to need and does not differentiate depending on political opinion. The source noted that aid organisations all have their own methodologies for prioritising recipients of aid.

What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

People in Zimbabwe are tentative about the current peace and are aware that it is fragile. There is some optimism, but the uncertainty about the future is evident in the population. It is believed that MDC have little power within the government and there is variable freedom of expression, although in MDC strongholds, it is more open. There was uncertainty about the

timing of the next elections. The police interfere less with political action, however, war veterans sometimes interrupt meetings about the constitution. There is intimidation by some war veterans and people allied with Zanu PF in some areas which limits expression and participation. In rural areas there is some fear of reprisal for speaking against Zanu PF. People can talk about politics more freely than previously but are still inhibited by memories of past persecution.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

There is widespread concern about the potential for violence in many rural communities. Many perpetrators of violence in 2008 remain unpunished and continue to threaten. There is a fear that any future election will lead to more violence. There is uncertainty over the frequency of violence at present, and the source referred the interviewers to specific organizations that track incidents and analyse trends. The source said there was a reported pattern in traditional Zanu-PF strongholds in terms of war veterans and other groups influencing participation in meetings held for the constitution making process. Many people avoid attending such meetings.

What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?

The police are generally better disciplined and following proper protocol than in the past and there is a general opinion that they are less tolerant of political violence. The police cannot operate independently of certain powerful, partisan forces within government. The organisation was not able to point to any statistics but expressed the view that the police are generally less tolerant of political violence than they were in the past. They attributed this to directions from ZANU-PF who are seeking to rely more on intimidation and less on actual physical violence.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

It is thought that political violence is variable, with increases at the time of elections or significant events. The Source thought that statistics and reports of political violence are not always accurate and is sometimes over-reported because of an understandable desire to draw attention to the problem. The source again referred the interviewers to specific organisations that track trends and geographic distribution of violence.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

There are no legal restrictions on movement and the Source did not anticipate that a returnee from the UK who relocated to the cities would face discrimination on that basis but would face the same difficulties everyone else faced as a result of the economic situation.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: A major NGO - asked to remain anonymous

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 11 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

The Source organisation is able to operate freely in respect of some aspects of its operations but in relation to work with IDPs there are some constraints on physical aspects to some areas. These are often overcome through local explanation and negotiation but concerns remain and the situation is expected to get worse as the next elections approach. The organisation is already working on contingency plans in an attempt to be able to maintain its operations but has significant doubts about how conducive the environment will remain.

Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

The Source considers that the provisions made for future aid are insufficient across the board.

Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

The Source further considers that those provinces which were 'hotspots' of political violence in 2008 to continue to be problematic. In 2009 it had to suspend operations for a time in Mashonaland Central. Operations only resumed in May 2010, and even then, 'cautiously', and the situation remains tense.

The Government of Zimbabwe's aid distribution office has to be involved in the whole aid distribution process and may sometimes be present at aid distribution operations. The organisations distributing the aid often prefer this level of involvement because it reduces the chances that the aid organisations themselves will be accused of politically motivated discrimination in the distribution of aid. But the downside that this has resulted in some political interference in the distribution of aid, notably in Mashonaland Central and East and Manicaland.

The Source also pointed to a pilot initiative in Mashonaland Central which has seen the Government of Zimbabwe seeking to link the provision of food aid through the World Food Programme to 'voluntary' work in the community. The GoZ has sought to justify this on the grounds that it reduces the risk of culture of dependency developing. However, the Source is greatly concerned that in the hands of government that is inclined to do so, it is potentially a tool of manipulation of aid.

What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

The situation now is more permissive but the Source doubts how sustainable this is and is very concerned that the next elections will see a return to the previous more restrictive state of affairs.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

The Source is not aware of ongoing widespread physical violence at the present time and incidences of actual violence now are relatively low. However, the Source was at pains to emphasise that this is likely a consequence of the widespread and real fear that was instilled in the last round of major violence in 2008, and actual and implied threats that the victims can expect the same in the run-up to the next elections. The Source was firmly of the view that such levels of intimidation in themselves may amount to persecution even in the absence of actual physical violence.

Assessing who may be at real risk from politically motivated violence is not as straightforward as simply the level of political activity. Much will depend on a person's standing in society. Someone walking around in an MDC t-shirt would be putting themselves at risk anywhere in Zimbabwe. But in the rural areas, those who are considered influential may be at risk as a consequence of even a relatively low level of political activity. Examples given were teachers, professionals, business people, people with money. In such cases, especially in rural areas, it could be sufficient for it simply to be known that the person concerned is an MDC supporter for them to attract adverse attention; the fact they have the potential to influence others may be sufficient – they need not be particularly active politically.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Manicaland and Masvingo were identified as particular 'hotspots' both for political interference in aid provision and for political violence.

Although stating that levels of actual political violence are currently quite low, the Source was of the view that the potential for political violence is significantly higher in most rural areas, with the exception of Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South, than it is in urban areas. This is because violence in rural areas can more easily be hidden and because that is where the ZANU strongholds tends to be located.

Urban areas tend to be much more open to the scrutiny of the media, civil society, international organisations etc., ZANU does not enjoy such high levels of support, and the police are more likely to intervene to stop political violence, whoever the perpetrator, for fear that a violent incident in an urban area could escalate and not be containable in the way that rural disturbances could be. For the same reasons levels of intimidation and threat are much lower in urban areas and therefore low level MDC supporters who feel no need to be active would probably not currently be at physical risk or real risk of intimidation in urban areas.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

There are no legal restrictions. However, the intelligence systems of the main political parties are sophisticated and it would not be possible for those who have come to the adverse attention of a party to avoid that risk by relocating within Zimbabwe. This applies equally to rural and urban areas. Thus, once a low level but influential MDC supporter had been singled out for attention in a rural area had been identified as such, it would not be possible for that person to avoid the threat by relocating to an urban area because that knowledge would follow them to the city, even though someone with a similar profile in the city would be unlikely to attract the same level of interest and so would probably not be at risk.

Interview with: Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 13 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

There are currently few restrictions on the Forum's ability to operate beyond those legal restrictions on NGO activity which remain in place. Under this, the police still from time to time use POSA to insist that the Forum obtains police permission for its meetings even though they are not political meetings.

The Forum has twice this year had occasions when meetings have been disrupted by local ZANU-PF officials even though they had obtained police permission to hold the meetings and there were uniformed police officers present. The police officers refused to intervene and stop the ZANU-PF officials terminating the meetings.

Does a person's actual or perceived political affiliation result in discrimination in the receipt of aid?

The Forum does not work directly in this area and therefore cannot give expert opinion except to the extent that reports it receives can illustrate. There was a time when it was very difficult for many people to access aid. Politicisation was a major problem, with the ZANU-PF leadership in many areas insisting that people had to show a party card to access aid. The situation is very different now and the Forum is not aware of any humanitarian organisation involved in aid distribution that allows food distribution to be controlled on a political basis. All now have effective mechanisms in place to prevent this, which is a remarkable transition.

Reports from one Forum member organisation suggest that there have been a few incidents of local individuals seeking to politicise aid distribution but this does not appear to be systematic and politicisation is not really a problem at the moment.

Has there been any political manipulation of aid – either NGO or state provision?

There have been major improvements in the health sector. People are getting drugs, many provided by humanitarian organisations. However, the cost of healthcare even in public hospitals puts it beyond the financial reach of many.

There is some politicisation in healthcare provision. If a patient is a victim of a human rights violation they cannot get treatment without a police report, which the police will often decline to provide, thus effectively barring treatment in public hospitals. In rural areas the senior people in charge of healthcare facilities will usually be controlled by ZANU-PF supporters and there is concern that this may lead to denial of treatment for those who are known to be MDC supporters. However the Forum has received no reports of this happening and it is likely to apply only to those who have a known profile as a political or human rights activists.

In the major cities, there is no political discrimination in the provision of healthcare and in fact most of the healthcare workers would probably be more inclined to discriminate against ZANU-PF supporters, but it doesn't happen, possibly because of higher literacy rates and political awareness.

The Source also explained that 'high profile' will mean different things in urban and rural areas. In the latter a Ward Chairperson would be a high profile figure but in the cities such a person would be a nobody.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more politically open?

The political space has not really opened up at all at the local level. People cannot speak freely about political matters and there have been instances of people in Combis being arrested after being overheard doing so. This is more of a problem in rural areas but applies to some extent anywhere. The space has opened up to some extent for civil society, who can now access previously out of bounds areas although some remain problematic, for example Mutoko and Chiweshe.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

It is important to note that violence always rises during election periods. Most current political violence is linked to the Constitutional Outreach process. It is not systematic but such as there is tends to be perpetrated by War Vets. Ordinary people who say the wrong things at meetings may be threatened, beaten, have their house burnt down, or be banished from their community. Higher profile figures are liable to be arrested and if so face torture which may include falanga and electric shock treatment.

Otherwise, levels of political violence are currently low, with more emphasis on threats along the lines of stay in line or expect to face worse violence than in 2008. The infrastructure to deliver large scale violence remains in place but at the moment violence is largely restricted to the constitutional process.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

The geographic spread of political violence and intimidation, and the likely hotspots for escalation in future, remain the same rural areas as experienced the worst violence in 2008. Matabeleland is very safe, with very little political violence there even in 2008. This is because ZANU-PF knows it will never win an election there so doesn't waste its time.

High density urban areas can be considered as 'quasi rural' in the sense that the people who live there have the same capacity to upset the status quo as those in rural areas, largely because they have little to lose. That is why they are subject to more concerted efforts at political control than those in other parts of the cities

Are the police partisan in their response to political violence and persecution?

Rather than being protectors, many police are persecutors and are effectively a paramilitary wing of ZANU-PF. MDC statements about the need for police reform have not been backed up by action and have little hope of achieving anything significant.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

The question of moving between different rural areas is not as simple as one of political affiliation; there are also questions of ethnicity. It is always difficult but it would for example be easier for an Ndebele to move to an Ndebele area, and likewise for Shona. There are some mixed areas but even if a member of an ethnic group were to move to an area dominated by their own group, they would still face difficulties. Much will depend on the local leadership, with some being more tolerant than others.

It is, though, difficult for ZANU-PF supporters to harm MDC supporters in MDC dominated areas because the MDC tend to be quite well organised in those areas and can protect those who might otherwise be at risk of political violence by the threat of retribution.

The Forum has not come across any cases of returnees from the UK being mistreated and would expect to know of any such cases because its member organisations are represented across the country. It works closely with the Zimbabwe Association in London and is alerted where there are concerns a returnee might be at risk but has not come across any cases where that is happened. They are unable to say that there have been no such cases but if there have been they have been isolated examples. They do however have concerns that those who are known to have claimed asylum in the UK would be considered necessarily to have been disloyal to Zimbabwe and may therefore face additional problems reintegrating because the fact that they had claimed asylum would become known. This would not apply to returning economic migrants unless their families were known to be political activists. The Forum considers that the abolition of hate speech against asylum seekers returning from the UK is central to creating a more conducive environment.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 11 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

The Source is able to carry out its programmes throughout the country. However, the political environment has noticeably deterred some people from participating, especially in rural areas because they fear that, although the organisation is not political and has members from both sides of the political divide, they will face awkward questioning about why they attended. The source explained that every ward in Zimbabwe has a Ward Co-ordinator who is financed by ZANU-PF and who will report attendance; and meetings are also routinely attended by CIO officers who again inhibit attendance. This is much less of a problem in towns and cities because people are generally less fearful and more enlightened.

Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

Availability of food will improve in the immediate future as a harvest is due. However this is unlikely to last and aid will continue to be needed.

Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

At the moment aid providers are operating freely but are subject to close monitoring by the govt aid department and the CIO.

The Source identified a shortfall in aid provision in urban areas and it has been suggested in some quarters that the GoZ has knowingly allowed an 'urban famine' to develop.

In Mutare, the sister organisation Caritas Zimbabwe through Mutare Diocese is funded by a Netherlands based NGO Cordaid where participants are given fertiliser and seeds to help them grow their own food and be self-sufficient, with enough food left to sell. Participants are also given an ATM-style card with \$30 in order to buy food while they wait for the harvest. The Government has requested that this project implementation format be changed to suit government policy, that people should do community work before they can be given access to food aid.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

There is little actual political violence at the moment. However, this is because the population has been so cowed by previous violence that they are afraid to do the sort of things that would provoke further actual violence – the threat of it is enough especially in the rural areas for traumatised local communities. This is much less the case in towns and cities but even here there is a degree of self-censorship because people are afraid of the possible consequences of

speaking out. So while people travelling in Combis might discuss politics, they will always be looking over their shoulder to see if someone is listening in on the conversation who might report them.

What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?

There were encouraging signs after the 2008 election that there might be a real will among the police to bring at least some of the perpetrators of political violence to justice. But after a number of convictions of ZANU-PF perpetrators, many of whom were in fact scapegoats in any case, ZANU-PF 'got cold feet' and the situation now has reverted to what it was up to 2008, with effective impunity for most of those who commit political violence in support of the ZANU-PF cause.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

Although levels of actual physical violence are low across the country, the tensions, and potential for a resurgence in political violence remain greatest in the provinces of Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Masvingo, Manicaland and Midland provinces – the key driver being ZANU's desire to reclaim lost political ground in what they see as their heartlands. In Matabeleland on the other hand, ZANU does not exert sufficient control to orchestrate large-scale violence, although there is the potential for incidents of targeted violence.

The source considered that there is potential for even higher levels of political violence before the anticipated 2011 elections than were in 2008. It is not however possible to predict with any confidence – much will depend on ZANU's assessment of its own prospects in the immediate pre-election period. If ZANU believes it can win an overall majority by sleight of hand, it will try to do so. But if not, it may unleash unprecedented violence on the basis that it has nothing to lose.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

Before the emergence of the MDC as a political force, there was no difficulty for a Zimbabwean living anywhere in the country. Since then the emergence of local Chiefs as powerful figures within ZANU-PF has seen that change. To relocate from one rural area to another a person will generally have to obtain a letter of reference from the former and future community leaders. In the absence of either, relocation between rural areas is not likely to be practicable. This can apply even in generally MDC dominated areas because even there the local chiefs tend to be ZANU supporters. In Matabeleland the situation more permissive and generally there should not be a problem. Much will depend on the attitude of individual chiefs but they are 'more mature' and tolerant of political differences.

There are no such problems in towns and cities – anyone can live anywhere, and if they have money to invest in e.g. building a house they will be positively welcomed.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Bulawayo Agenda

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 16 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

The source stated that they are able to carry out almost all of their normal activities, and the instances of activities being interfered with have decreased since the GNU was formed. The organisation typically holds three meetings per month in each of 14 districts. This includes leadership forums, where government departments and civil society can collaborate in order to improve the local area and increase development. A meeting was stopped in Bulawayo in 2010. There have been two meetings stopped in Matabeleland north in 2010; one was prevented from taking place and the other was stopped during the meeting. The organisers of the meetings were arrested. One community-based organiser was held in custody for four days because the police stated that they did not have clearance for the meeting to take place, even though that was not true. The same organiser was arrested on another occasion in Lupare, with another organiser being arrested in Victoria Falls. There have been no arrests of activists or organisers in Bulawayo since the formation of the GNU.

The source believed that they were targeted because they are an NGO, not because of the topics they discussed.

Meetings were suspended before the World Cup because police personnel were missing.

The organisation was recently called to a police station and questioned on their sources of information. They were then told that they should not be bringing things to public attention if they damage the reputation of Zimbabwe.

Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

There has been a slight improvement in freedom of expression since the GNU was formed, however people do not trust people they do not know enough to openly discuss politics.

The organisation has been collecting information for the COPAC process and has found that people are sometimes reluctant to express their views openly in case of reprisals. The organisation attempts to convince people that they are free to discuss whatever they want, however the fear is deeply ingrained and there can be no guarantees that people are safe. However, the organisation is not aware of any recent arrests for speaking against the government.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

Ordinary people are not being threatened, but threats have been made towards activists. Threats and physical violence within Matabeleland North and South, Bulawayo, Midlands, Masvingo and Manicaland have declined since the formation of the GNU. The War Veterans and Zanu PF youth are not as vicious as they once were in Matabeleland as they are no longer taking instruction following the formation of the GNU and are instead living peacefully within their communities.

What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?

The police are not helping victims of political violence at all and they are still seen as linked to Zanu PF. The police in Matabeleland are Shona, despite Shona being a minority population. There is mistrust of the police and there is also sometimes a language barrier, although at times this is falsely created.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

The COPAC process has seen war veterans active in other areas, but not around Matabeleland and the surrounding regions. Matabeleland is much more free from violence than Mashonaland because Zanu PF acknowledge that they will not get votes.

The people of Matabeleland do not believe that the national healing process is intended for them, and instead believe it is an attempt to placate the people of Mashonaland who were affected by violence in 2008.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

Movement between two rural areas would be very difficult as many questions would be asked about anyone moving. Moving from a rural area to an urban area, such as Bulawayo, would not cause any problems from an ethnic or safety point of view. Similarly, there would be no such problem when moving between two urban areas.

The source was aware of four people who had returned to Zimbabwe from the UK, one of whom was a failed asylum seeker, although this was not common knowledge. She was not aware that any of them had faced any difficulty on return to Zimbabwe.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 16 August 2010

Is your organisation currently able to operate freely within Zimbabwe?

There have been three or four cases this month where the police have stopped the organisation from holding a meeting by refusing to issue a permit, stating that because of the Constitution process, only political parties were allowed to hold meetings. When meetings have gone ahead, members of a different Residents' Association in Bulawayo, which is aligned with Zanu PF, have attended and disrupted the meeting. When police were asked to attend, they instead sympathised with those disrupting the meeting, stating that the meeting was too noisy and should be stopped.

Has the supply and distribution of humanitarian aid improved or worsened since the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in March 2009, and especially over the last 6 months?

The situation has improved.

Are you currently aware of any discrimination or irregularities in the provision of aid?

In October 2009, the source saw people in Zanu PF t-shirts giving food aid to Zanu PF members, but has not other specific examples of political bias in food aid distribution. The local governor in Bulawayo is part of Zanu PF, and prioritises Zanu PF members for social aid projects, such as giving out cheques for small business start-ups. Conversely, the Local Authority, which is part of MDC, is responsible for giving out food aid by NGOs, and this is now evenly distributed amongst all who need it, and is not dependent on any political affiliation. Medical services are governed by hospitals, and medical help is given to everybody equally, with no preference given depending on political affiliation.

What have been the main differences in the political environment since the formation of the GNU?

The organisation has worked with all political parties for consultation and public information since its formation in 2007. There is a concern that Zanu PF are determined to win the next election and there is uncertainty and unease over the methods they will employ.

Can you set out your understanding of the nature and incidence of political violence in Zimbabwe at the present time (i.e. post GNU)?

The current situation is peaceful – for the moment, at least. Violence is much less widespread and the violence is less open. Most of the political violence seen is at meetings between two individuals who have contrasting ideas, rather than as part of a systematic campaign. Although the situation is currently calm, there is still the potential for an upturn in violence should a big political event happen.

Currently, during the COPAC process, some people have been approached after meetings in Bulawayo and threatened with violence. However, the source is not aware of any physical violence taking place.

What are the police doing to protect victims of political persecution?

The police have not acted so far. The perception is that they are there to serve Zanu PF, as Zanu PF are protecting police jobs.

Are some areas of Zimbabwe more affected by political violence and repression than others?

The source noted that in Victoria Falls, a Residents' Association was not permitted to hold a COPAC meeting and that another groups in Matabeleland South had had low turnouts at meetings. In Bulawayo, everyone is permitted to speak freely at meetings, although they are more cautious in public due to uncertainty about who is around at that time.

Matabeleland Civil Society are monitoring the process, and have noticed that there have been problems of intimidation in Insiza, where 300 people attended a meeting, but only one spoke. Everyone agreed with the single person except for one group, who were noticed by a War Veteran and threatened outside.

Generally, people are more free to speak in Bulawayo than in the surrounding urban areas.

Are there any restrictions on someone moving and settling in another part of Zimbabwe?

People are free to move to the urban areas without fear, the only hardship being economic. However, moving from an urban area to a rural area, or between two rural areas, is difficult as questions are asked.

There has been an influx of Shona to Bulawayo, and some local residents do not like this and there are occasional incidents of violence. However, there are only isolated cases of this.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Anonymous – a faith based organisation working in Zimbabwe

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 16 August 2010

Overview

A faith based organisation working in 10 Provinces of Zimbabwe through faith based community groups in urban and rural areas. The organisation carries out advocacy and governance work and networks within civil society. It is also part of an ecumenical coalition group of cross denominational church leaders.

1. To a degree, although this depends on the area. The organisation has no problems working in Matabeleland and the Midlands, but working in Mashonaland East and Central is made problematic by ZANU-PF. District Administrators appointed by ZANU-PF control these areas along with the local CIO offices and the police and at times prevent the organisations from holding meetings. Marondera and Murirwa are places the organisation cannot access. The local police pastor in Marondera refused to organise a meeting as he was too afraid. Small meetings in Masvingo (Gutu) have taken place but been tense. S. 24(d) of POSA states that the requirement to register an intention to hold a public meeting does not apply to religious organisations but if the police hear about intended meetings, then intimidation takes place beforehand to prevent people from attending. In May and June of this year the organisation carried out 6 of 10 intended meetings.

4. There has been a notable difference. Post election there was a lot of violence. That decreased but there appears to be a resurgence that has started with the COPAC process. There has been intimidation in parts of Masvingo, Gutu and Bikita. There have been tensions around former commercial farms where people have been resettled.

5. Violence is perpetrated by the war veterans and youth militia. This is controlled by ZANU-PF structures. The continued presence of the perpetrators maintains a continued state of tension in these areas where violence has taken place. A number of perpetrators have also been rewarded by ZANU-PF which adds to that tension. Activism is often presumed due to a link being made between civil society and membership of a political party. Involvement in aid distribution is also seen as political. A lack of participation in political actions can have the same affect. Professionals are also often perceived as part of the opposition, as are some pastors. This all depends on local ZANU-PF personalities. Violence has also been precipitated by victims of previous violence attempting to recover their possessions or exact retribution. In May in Mikita 10 victims attacked 2 perpetrators in a beer hall. The CIO then came for them and their families. In June, there was an incident of soldiers intimidating people in Karoi.

6. The Police generally follow orders from a central command.

7. Violence can be linked to strong ZANU-PF areas but also to areas were the MDC has taken over a previously strong ZANU-PF area. Areas were the COPAC process is due to move through are also prone to violence. Those most affected in general terms are Mashonaland

East, Central and West and Midlands. In Mutare there were pockets of violence during the COPAC meetings.

8. In terms of people moving from one area to another, then they could be targeted. In small towns such as Victoria Falls and Hwange people could also be at risk.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Anonymous - Attribute to “major international humanitarian organisation”

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 17 August 2010

1. The Source organisation is generally able to operate freely but over the past year it has been prevented from accessing the diamond fields. Elsewhere, access is surprisingly good. The organisation operates a substantial programme spread across the country.

2. The aid situation is certainly better now than it was in 2008/2009, although the formation of the GNU is not the best baseline as there were particular challenges around that time because of serious restrictions on the operations of NGOs.

The population is generally able to access aid now. There are still major shortfalls in the amount of aid but that is generally down to lack of resources rather than any deliberate attempts to deprive recipients. Food aid is the most politicised aid and it is not only ZANU-PF that is guilty of that. The Source organisation noted there was limited political interference in the aid it provides.

3. There are shortfalls in services everywhere, and some areas might have better provision of one form of aid but worse of another, making it difficult to generalise about which parts of the country are worse than others. It is certainly the case that rural areas are generally worse than urban areas, but such has been the deterioration in infrastructure that the urban areas are certainly not immune, as evidenced by the cholera outbreaks in all major urban centres.

4. Generally the source believes that the political space has opened up to allow people to discuss political issues more freely. However, an increase in incidents of violence in connection with the constitutional outreach programme has complicated the picture.

5. There is a continuing, low level, chronic incidence of political violence and harassment but certainly the levels are lower and the peaks have flattened. It is not, however, the case that one can attribute all current political violence to the constitutional outreach programme, as it existed to an extent before.

6. In parts of the country and in relation to certain programmes, the police are trying to do their best to help. However, in some areas the police have been associated with violence and intimidation or at the very least not stopped it. Elsewhere they are more often the perpetrators of violence and intimidation rather than protectors.

7. There is no safe hiding place for political activists and others with a sufficiently high political profile and it is therefore extremely important that asylum claims are considered on a case by case basis.

8. The source is not aware of any specific issues with people moving from one part of the country to another.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Commercial Farmers Union

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 12 August 2010

The organisation represents all commercial farmers who are members, black and white. In 2000 it had a membership of around 4,500 farmers who were farming. Of them only about 300 are farming at the date of interview. Many of these only on small holding that they have managed to salvage from farm seizures. Of those who have lost their farms, only about 200 have been compensated in any way, with most of those only being paid around 10% of the actual value of their properties.

The organisation has also started another organisation called ZEST, Zimbabwe Elderly Support Trust, which provides care for many dispossessed farmers and their families who are unable to cope in the current environment.

The Organisation has also recently signed an MOU to work with the Zimbabwe Farmers Association, which represents 170,000 black farm workers.

Commercial farmers now occupy less than 1% of agricultural land in Zimbabwe. Over 100 farmers are still in court being prosecuted for owning farms bought after independence. A small number of black farmers have had their farms seized, but those have been politically motivated seizures. Previously, the commercial section housed and employed over one third of the population of the country. Therefore, when farms were seized and farm workers thrown off the land, around 2 million people were left with no homes or livelihoods. Many have since left the country.

The source noted that some areas were being allowed to recover a white base of farmers who are renting land from the current beneficiaries. It was surmised that this was a deliberate tactic to enable ZANU-PF to persecute white farmers at a future date in order to demonstrate to the electorate that land reform was continuing.

Farm Employees

Many of those who previously worked on farms have now died. Many of Aids related issues. The source stated that around 60% of his former workers were probably dead at the time of interview. In part this is due to the collapse of medical facilities meaning that those who had fallen ill had no support, especially so in they were HIV+.

Most farm workers on white farms are perceived to be MDC supporters. The source provided an example from his farm where he employed 600 workers. 11 thugs entered the area and identified the 4 main workers, gave sticks to their children and made them beat their parent in front of the other workers. All 4 workers left the following day, with one committing suicide shortly afterwards.

Teachers have been actively persecuted. Many assisted with the 2000 elections (some schools for example were used as polling stations) and they are therefore connected with the MDC.

Police

Many are not happy with events in Zimbabwe but have no alternative but to stay within the police force. The current salary of \$150 per month is low but better than being unemployed. They are still being used as part of the state security machinery although there has been a shift since Makoni became co-Minister of Home Affairs. However the effectiveness of the police still varies from district to district. Many officers are politically promoted.

Violence

The source reported that there appeared to be an increase in activity now, and a change from War Veterans to youth militia. There were also concerns over the issue of child soldiers, with most of the militia being aged 12-18. Between March and June this year there was an increase of 40,000 civil servants – these were mainly youth. It is possible to see the violence starting to pick up again and take form. It is occurring in the same areas as 2008.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Interview with: Radio Dialogue

Conducted by: Debbie Goodier, Country of Origin Information Service, UKBA, Mark Walker, Country Specific Policy Team, UKBA and Andrew Jones, First Secretary (Migration), British Embassy Harare

Interview date: 16 August 2010

This organisation is a community radio service dedicated mostly to informing people of their rights. The organisation has tried to get a broadcasting licence but due to uncertainty over the control of the broadcasting authority, this has not been possible.

1. The organisation is able to operate without too much interference, however they have been 'warned off' calling for regime change. They also find it difficult to get official comments as they are viewed as a pirate radio station.

4. Some journalists have been allowed access to prisons, and have been given some more freedom, however POSA is still applied and it is still illegal to speak badly about the President, which means people are uncertain about speaking out if they do not know who is around them. People in urban areas have less fear about speaking openly than those in rural areas. A collection of NGOs are currently looking at the constitution in focus groups with communities.

7. Bulawayo is more open than Harare and many civil society groups operate from there.

[Return to contents](#)
[Go to interview notes](#)

Annex E

INTERVIEW NOTES - RETURNEES

Selection Criteria

The seven returnees interviewed by the Zimbabwe Fact Finding Mission were selected by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). IOM compiled a list of 20 people who they asked if they would agree to be interviewed by UKBA and FCO about their experience on return. In compiling this list IOM sought to ensure that there was a representative mix of male and female returnees, of people who had returned to Harare and to Bulawayo, and who had returned under each of the three reintegration assistance packages that have been available to Zimbabweans in the last eighteen months. Of the 20, eight agreed to be interviewed (one of whom withdrew at the last moment). The eight tended to be from the more recent returnees. IOM speculates, but does not know, that this could be because those who returned earlier had already received all their reintegration assistance and thus had less need for continued liaison with IOM.

[Return to contents](#)

Zimbabwe Fact Finding Mission – Questions for Returnees

1. Why did you return to Zimbabwe/did you claim asylum in the UK?
2. What was the basis of your asylum claim?
3. When did you leave the UK?
4. Did you leave the UK voluntarily?
5. Which airline/route did you leave the UK on?
6. Did you have your own passport?
7. If no, what travel document did you use?
Where did you obtain this from?
Assuming EoZ were you asked why you needed an emergency Travel Document?
Whether you had claimed asylum in the UK?
8. Where did you fly from/to?
9. Did you have any contact with the Zimbabwean authorities after you left Harare airport?
If so, what happened?
10. Did anyone else cause you problems when you returned? Who? Why?
11. Do you know any other failed asylum seekers who have been returned to Zimbabwe since November 2004?
12. Do you know whether they returned voluntarily?

13. Do you know what happened to them?
14. Did you contact any NGOs or civil society organisations for help when you returned to Zimbabwe?
15. Where do you live?
16. Did you have any problems finding somewhere to live when you returned to Zimbabwe?
17. Do friends/neighbours/others know that you claimed asylum in the UK?
18. How have they reacted to that knowledge?

[Return to contents](#)

Annex F

REFERENCES TO SOURCE MATERIAL

- [1] **Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (Zim Rights)** www.zimrights.co.zw
a FFM transcript of interview held on 5 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [2] **Anonymous – an anonymous organisation**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 3 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [3] **Research and Advocacy Unit (RAU)** www.researchandadvocacyunit.org
a FFM transcript of interview held on 17 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [4] **Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)** www.galz.co.zw
a FFM transcript of interview held on 17 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [5] **Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights (ZADHR)** www.zadhr.org
a FFM transcript of interview held on 12 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [6] **Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR)** <http://www.zlhr.org.zw/>
a FFM transcript of interview held on 12 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [7] **Counselling Services Unit (CSU)**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 12 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [8] **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** <http://www.icrc.org/>
a FFM transcript of interview held on 12 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [9] **Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum** www.hrforumzim.com
a FFM transcript of interview held on 13 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [10] **Anonymous – ‘an organisation working in Zimbabwe’**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 11 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [11] **Anonymous – ‘a major NGO’**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 11 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [12] **Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Zimbabwe (CCJPZ)**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 11 August 2010.
Link to transcript

- [13] **Bulawayo Agenda (BA)** <http://www.bulawayoagenda.com/>
a FFM transcript of interview held on 16 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [14] **Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association (BPRA)** <http://www.bprazim.org/>
a FFM transcript of interview held on 16 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [15] **A faith based organisation based in Zimbabwe**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 16 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [16] **Anonymous – ‘a major International Humanitarian Organisation’**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 17 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [17] **Commercial Farmers Union (CFU)**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 12 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [18] **Returnee Interview 1**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 11 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [19] **Returnee Interview 2**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 11 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [20] **Returnee Interview 3**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 11 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [21] **Returnee Interview 4**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 13 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [22] **Returnee Interview 5**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 15 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [23] **Returnee Interview 6**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 15 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [24] **Returnee Interview 7**
a FFM transcript of interview held on 15 August 2010.
Link to transcript
- [25] **Radio Dialogue** <http://www.radiodialogue.com/>
a FFM transcript of interview held on 16 August 2010.
Link to transcript