

Zimbabwe - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 26 October 2023

Information on Internal Relocation.

In August 2023 *Human Rights Watch* mentioned that:

“...the Zimbabwean authorities have greatly limited the space for opposition parties to campaign. Through various means, they have restricted the rights to freedom of expression, movement, and association, leaving the opposition unable to stage rallies, mobilize, campaign, and associate with supporters. ZANU-PF has ensured that the playing field is skewed, with the Zimbabwe Republic Police persistently refusing to issue permits to the opposition to hold campaign rallies while allowing ZANU-PF to meet without hindrance.” (Human Rights Watch (3 August 2023) *“Crush Them Like Lice”: Repression of Civil and Political Rights Ahead of Zimbabwe's August 2023 Election*, p.3)

Medecins Sans Frontieres in June 2023 reported that:

“Before the COVID-19 pandemic some 15,000 people, including migrants and refugees from Zimbabwe and other countries, truck drivers and travellers, crossed the border from Beitbridge daily through either the official border post or illegal crossing points. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, that number has decreased to around 800, but migration has not stopped. Some people passing through Beitbridge seek asylum and apply for refugee status in South Africa.” (Medicins Sans Frontieres (20 June 2021) *Beitbridge: Healthcare improvement needed for people on the move*).

The same document mentioned that:

“Some people travel back and forth between South Africa and their place of origin or relocate entirely in search of a better life. In both cases, people passing through Beitbridge experience many hardships during their journeys - threats, violence, xenophobia, stigma, lack of food and water and limited access to health care.” (Ibid).

A report issued by the *Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum* in April 2023 states that:

“On 24 August 2022, ZANU PF activists led by the District Coordinating Committee Youth Chairperson, Mcnorman Chitongo, barricaded the road to Harare from Sadza (Chikomba Constituency) at Chogwedere Shopping Centre. This was done to block the way for CCC officials from conducting a meeting at Garaba Township in Ward 6, Wedza. The meeting still took place but was then disrupted by ZANU PF activists.” (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (13 April 2023) *Zimbabwe: The Full Story - July to December 2022 (Political and Human Rights Violations Report)*, p.5).

The report further mentioned that:

“On 1 November 2022, the Forum's National Transitional Justice Working Group (NTJWG) conducted a community dialogue in ARDA Transau – a relocation area. Members of this community are victims of forced evictions, having been forcibly relocated from the Chiadzwa

diamond mining fields in Marange in 2009 to the Agricultural Rural Development Authority (ARDA) Transau to pave way for massive diamond mining by the Government and some Chinese companies. By the time the NTJWG visited the community with the Forum's Research and Documentation Unit, the situation was now critically severe. Community members indicated that they had gone for one year without water in an area with no boreholes or wells to speak of. This left villagers to collect water from River Odzi, a highly unsafe water source as it is heavily contaminated by diamond mining waste and chemicals (mercury and cyanide) that are deposited into the river." [...] (Ibid, p.13).

The *US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices in March 2023* under the heading "Freedom of Movement" states that:

"The constitution and law provide for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, but the government restricted these rights." (US Department of State (20 March 2023) *2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Zimbabwe*, p.13).

The document further points out that:

"The government maintained a formal encampment policy requiring refugees to live at Tongogara Refugee Camp. Nevertheless, as of October, approximately 900 refugees lived in urban areas, including Harare and Bulawayo, and more than 6,500 Mozambican asylum seekers lived among host communities along the porous border with Mozambique." (Ibid, p.14).

A report issued by *Freedom House* in March 2023 notes that:

"Movement is restricted by the extensive use of police roadblocks, which are used to impede protests and opposition rallies." (Freedom House (9 March 2023) *Freedom in the World 2023: Zimbabwe*, p.9).

Sunday News in December 2022 point out that:

"Born in Beitbridge, Ms Mbedzi relocated to Dete where she worked as a community development person for Painted Dog Conservation, an organisation entirely dedicated to conserving the endangered African wild dog." (Sunday News (4 December 2022) *Woman transforms Dete women's lives*).

The newspaper further states that:

"As the Covid-19 restrictions continued to be eased I decided to look for markets outside Hwange and moved to Harare. It is there that I managed to attend the weekend craft market that takes place every Saturday." [...] (Ibid).

In November 2022, the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM)* states that:

"According to our model, the factors accounting most for Zimbabwe's high-risk estimate are its lack of freedom of movement for men." (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) (29 November 2022) *Countries at Risk for Mass Killing 2022–23: Early Warning Project Statistical Risk Assessment Results [Zimbabwe excerpt]*)

Asylum Research Center in October 2022 reported that:

“Military officers patrolling the Beitbridge border post received bribes to facilitate unauthorized crossings, including in past years from organized criminal groups likely transporting victims of human trafficking” (Asylum Research Center (October 2022) *Zimbabwe: Country Report, October 2022*).

In July 2022, the US Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) states that:

“Significant human rights issues include credible reports of: [...] restrictions on freedom of movement ...” (US Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) (6 July 2022) *Zimbabwe Country Security Report 2022*).

In March 2022, *Voice of America News* reports that:

““The Cyclone destroyed our house,” she said. “So we were moved to temporary shelters – tents. I was then raped by soldiers. After that they give me some food. I did not report [to police]. It was during the night and they were six. My mother had visited and that’s the time they came.”” (Voice of America News (25 March 2022) *Three Years Later, Some Zimbabweans Still Tormented by Rapes After Cyclone Idai*)

New Zimbabwe in January 2022 point out that:

“Internally displaced persons were relocated to the farm from Chiadzwa to make way for the largest diamond field in the country.” (New Zimbabwe (17 January 2022) *Mugabe’s Donated Computers Lying Idle 12 Years Later*).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. All COI Query Responses are compiled in line with the Common EU Guidelines (2008) and the EUAA Report Methodology (2023). This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to international protection. Please refer to all documents cited.

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