



# Recruiting leaders and Activists

Recruiting victims of political repression to be politically active.

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# Zimbabwean context

Since independence Zimbabwe has experienced different phases of political repression. While women continue to survive and manage violence in their daily lives, the peak of political repression have been prior, during and post election periods. National programmes on national healing and reconciliation have been done from a perpetrator's approach at the expense of the survivors.

# Political Repression in Zimbabwe

Women have experienced political repression as candidates, voters and based on their relations to political activists. Manifestations have been through

- Rape
- Political motivated displacements
- Destruction of homes, market places
- Abductions
- Physical battering and torture
- Agricultural produce and livestock confiscation or burnt.
- Psychological ( personal..family...



## Recruitment of victims of political repression to be politically active

The participation of women in politics and decision making processes have been crippled by the effects of political repression. While some were strengthened in their activism in the desire for change some women felt vulnerable and retreated from the struggle. The continued violation of women's rights and women's limited access to and control resources continue to call for women's accelerated participation in politics transform governance from autocracy to democracy, mainstreaming gender in laws, policies and development initiatives and create a social, political and economic environment that empowers women to assert and enjoy their rights.

# Methods employed

- Participatory needs assessment with survivors ( during and post violence situations)
- Establishment and utilization of a support system network ( health, legal, psychological, advocacy, food and financial aid support)
- Periodic follow up and Victims reassurance programmes. ( retreats, support visits edutainment)
- Facilitation for the establishment of community based psychosocial support structures and institutions. ( Doors of Hope, Informal settlers association)

# Challenges

- Restoration of means of livelihoods and accommodation is still outstanding.
- ZANU PF continue to breach the Global Political Agreement by establishment of community bases for continued violence.
- Security and legal institutions continue to be used to perpetrate violence.
- There are repressive laws in relation to people mobilizing themselves for action
- Some women still do not know where their husbands, relatives and children are.

# Opportunities

- The establishment of the Ministry responsible for national healing
- Existence of regional and international sisters ( shared learning and support)
- The civic society and service providers in Zimbabwe



## conclusion

Recruiting survivors of political repression to be political active requires engaging them and supporting them on initiatives that they feel are practical to address their issues and concerns. All it takes is establishing a conducive environment and a support system through networks as well as raising political consciousness on the value to participation in politics and decision making positions towards transformation to democracy and good governance.



## Take home statement

We are all capable and it's everyone's responsibility. Let's all take action to make it happen. Survivors of political repression can quantitatively and qualitatively participate in politics and decision making processes.