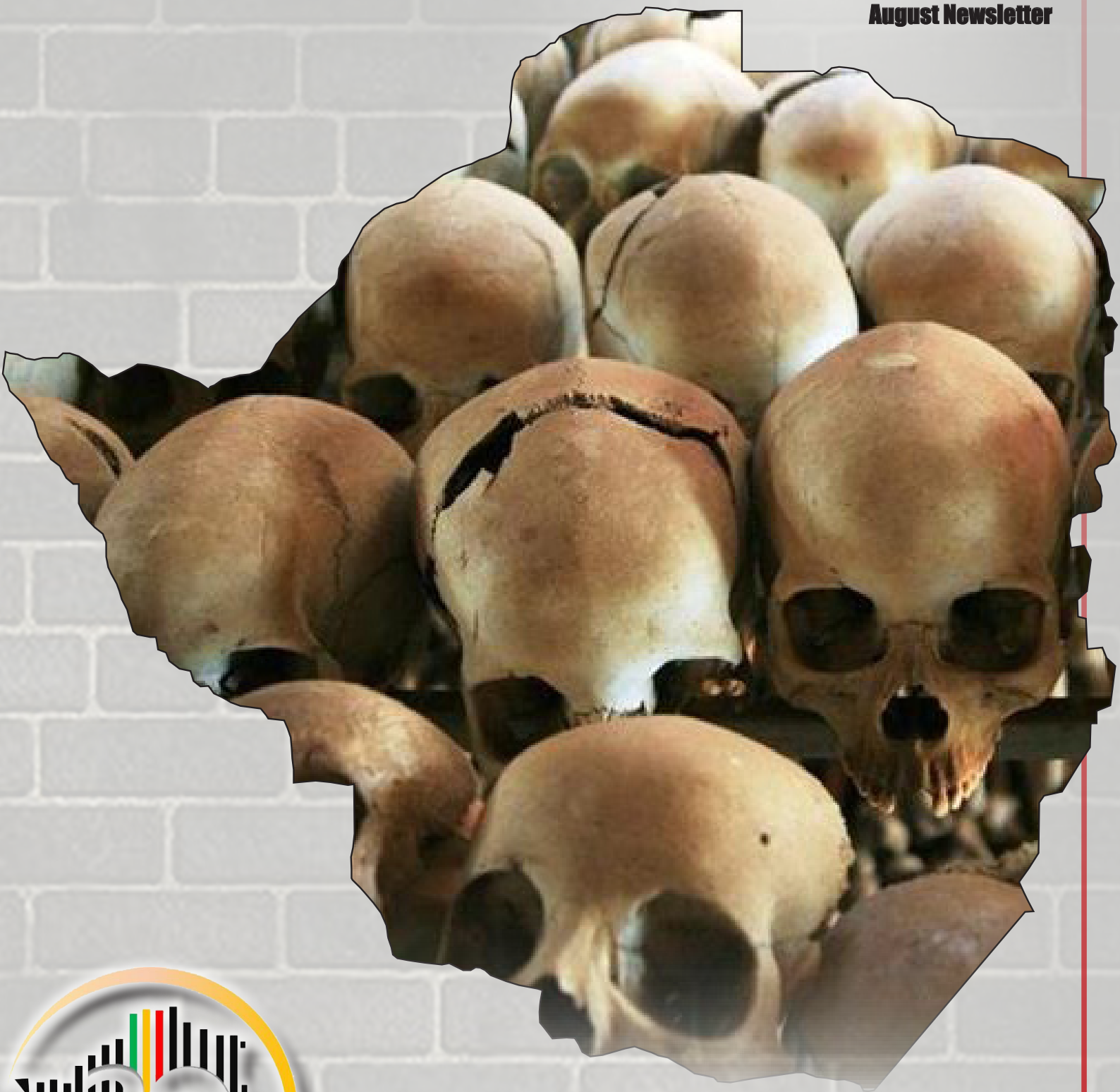


Crisis Report

August Newsletter



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THE Crisis Report brings to you a presentation by Ibhetshu LikaZulu leader, Mbuso Fuzwayo on the issue of Gukurahundi. The presentation was made during a virtual dialogue meeting hosted by Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition, which also looked at the issue of national healing.

Fuzwayo presented on whether there is traction relating to the Gukurahundi massacres which claimed an estimated 20 000 people in the Midlands and Matabeleland provinces.

Below, we capture his presentation:

"The question asks: Is there traction on justice on the Gukurahundi genocide? The answer is, NO. Nothing at all on that front. There is nothing, not because it is impossible to do something to get justice, but because nothing is being done to get justice.

As Ibhetshu Likazulu, we have maintained and shall continue to maintain that there can't be justice without the truth, and no truth without a genuine search for the truth.

To us, truth and justice are two sides of the same coin. The road to justice on the Gukurahundi genocide must be paved through the truth. We, therefore, need a mechanism and process that will deliver the truth first as a prerequisite for justice. As we speak there is no such mechanism and process. The Government of Zimbabwe has no intention at all to seek and deliver truth and justice.

The National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC), as currently constituted and mandated, cannot deliver truth and justice either.

The NPRC is in many ways

Gukurahundi: Is there traction on justice?

a practical, yet sad, expression of the unwillingness of the Government of Zimbabwe to bring about the resolution of the Gukurahundi genocide.

Its composition and mandate tells a story of a body designed and instructed to fail. The NPRC is failing not because things are difficult but because it was designed to fail. The biggest challenge we have is that we are attempting to meaningfully address the Gukurahundi genocide when the perpetrator is still in power.

As Ibhetshu LikaZulu, we are not naïve. We know there is no commitment on the part of the perpetrator to find a lasting solution to the Gukurahundi genocide. We know the perpetrator is buying time and hoping that victims and survivors will somehow forget and move on with their lives.

The regime is hoping that with time, the Gukurahundi genocide will be forgotten. This, however, will never happen. The pain is being passed from one generation to the other. Memories of pain continue to be transferred to future generations.

As such, even centuries cannot derail the search for truth and justice. It will continue beyond the life of ZANU PF and even when none of the survivors are alive.

Way forward

First, we need a post-ZANU dispensation. Only after ZANU PF is gone can we have the possibility of a process and institutions that can bring about truth and justice.

Secondly, we need a genuinely independent body, with adequate human, technical and financial resources, to replace the NPRC. Such a body must be composed of international experts on mass atrocity crimes and be supervised by the United Nations. No justice can emerge from a process led by the perpetrators and bodies they control.

We reject the sham process led by President Mnangagwa as a waste of time and resources. He knows his process will not result in truth and justice. His process is a cover up.

Victims and survivors have a right to know the full truth about what happened, where, who did what, and the fate of those who disappeared. Most importantly, the victims have the right to mourn their dead. Like all other rights, this right is being denied. Many have been arrested or somehow persecuted for mourning, just for expressing grief about their dead.

Memorial plaques are being pulled down by the state. None of this points to a state that is committed to truth and justice. Truth and justice go hand in hand.

As I conclude, let me emphasize what I consider to be the most important prerequisites for truth and justice. What we need is:

- A victim-centered and victim-driven process
- An international independent body to lead the search for truth and justice
 - Full acknowledgement
 - Truth telling
 - Meaningful participation of affected communities

BY CRISIS REPORT

ROWDY politicians and individuals with links to the ruling party are using their political connections to loot national resources and evade arrest at a time the government has shown lack of political will to deal with high level corruption, Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition spokesperson, Marvellous Khumalo has said.

Zimbabwe has lost millions of United States dollars due to illicit gold trade and despite the culprits being apprehended there have not been convictions with the culprits walking scot-free while wining and dining with political heavyweights.

A case in point is that of Zimbabwe Miners Federation president Henrietta Rushwaya who, was apprehended at the Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport in October

'Cartels plundering national resources with the aid of politicians'

(2020) while in possession of 6kg of gold which she intended to smuggle to Dubai.

Rushwaya allegedly used political links to evade conviction and later on went to win the presidency of the Zimbabwe Miners Federation despite her case being before the courts.

Several high-ranking officials and individuals with links to ruling party politicians have been involved in cases of gold smuggling and corrup-

tion related to procurement of Covid-19 materials, but the cases continue to fall away.

In some of the cases, the President of Zimbabwe, Emmerson Mnangagwa and the First Family have been implicated.

In an interview, Khumalo said the fact that there have been no convictions on these crimes makes the second republic complicit in corruption and illicit gold trade.

"We know for a fact that Mnangagwa has been involved in illicit gold trading since time immemorial and his activities and shenanigans in the Midlands Province are well documented," he said.

"Henrietta Rushwaya represents a network of illegal gold dealers and that is why she is untouchable and cases against her are easily thrown away given her history at Zimbabwe Football Association."

During her tenure as the Zimbabwe Football Association president, Rushwaya was implicated in match-fixing scandals that became to be known as Asiagate.

"The moment we have a State president who is also involved in illicit gold trading, then that is when we lose the plot as a country in terms of tackling gold smuggling and ensuring the arrest of the gold smugglers," said Khumalo.



ZMF president Henrietta Rushwaya (in dotted blue shirt) being escorted to Harare Magistrates Court
[Credit: NewZimbabwe.com]

THE Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) has revealed cases of gross abuse of workers by Chinese employers. Below, we outline ZCTU's findings at one Chinese firm, Sunny Yi Feng:

- Employees complained that a number of their counterparts have been injured, some killed, and women sometimes collapsing because of exposure to gas leaks as well as scaled up workplace Gender based violence and violation of national legislation and Convention 190.

- Employees are paid less than the stipulated minimum wages/salaries, exposed to unsafe working conditions, and noncompliance with labour standards.

- Workers were asked to pay for Personal Protective Equipment and each got a deduction of fifteen United States dollars.

The company violated safety and health regulations as employees worked without provision of adequate personal protection equipment.

They have not been taken for occupational medical check-ups

- The majority of workers have been injured and some killed as a result of workplace hazards and none of them compensated.

There is serious under reporting of workplace accidents and this needs to be investigated.

- Most workers were paid way beyond their actual paydays. They also did not have pay slips, they were paid way below the stipulated minimum wages

- Working hours were in

When oppressors are touted as all weather friends: The case of the Chinese in Zim

excess of eight hours per day as stipulated in the Collective Bargaining Agreement covering the ceramic sector.

- Workers were denied the right to gather and discuss working conditions including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Recommendations from the ZCTU

- Payment of appropriate stipulated wages/salaries

- Management is requested to honour the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and pay workers the correct minimum wages according to their grades.

On working hours, management is requested to stick to the hours prescribed in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and any hours in excess should be deemed as over time and paid in terms of stipulated overtime calculations.

The other area that should be corrected is on delayed payment of wages. We implore management to start paying employees on time not beyond the stipulated date of pay.

Wage deductions for attending sanctioned meetings or having gone to see a doctor must be discontinued and all those employees whose wages were deducted should be refunded their monies.

- It is very important that a comprehensive safety and health inspection be conducted and that all the workers taken for specific occupational medical check-ups as a matter of urgency.

They should also be established safety and health committee including the workers committee, which must start engagements with management through organised meetings.

- The current structures where workers are housed should be demolished and better houses built for all the workers.

BY WALPE

THE Women's Academy for Leadership and Political Excellence (Walpe) calls on the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (Zec) to ensure proper functioning of its designated voter registration centers to afford every citizen the chance to participate in the exercise.

This comes as five Walpe members on July 16, 2021 failed to register at the registration centre at Makombe Building after being referred from one Harare office to another as Zec officers gave numerous excuses that hindered them from participating in the exercise.

Walpe challenges Zec on voter registration

The Walpe members first attended to Makombe Building at the Registrar General's office where they were advised that Zec staff were off duty before being referred to Cecil House Provincial Offices, but still failed to register because the biometric voter registration machine there was down.

Our members were greatly inconvenienced and now have to reschedule the visit in order to register to vote.

Walpe affirms that it is every citizen's right, especially women to register to vote and secure their participation in the 2023 elections as enshrined in Section 67(3) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe.

Increased women political participation is at the core of our main goals as an organization as it is fundamental to the achievement of provisions of Sections 17, 56 and 80 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe which guarantees gender equality.

We believe that voter registration is an ongoing exercise and as Walpe, we, therefore, urge Zec:

- To effectively communicate its activities through various media, highlighting any adjustments, change of venues or any other pertinent issues to avoid inconveniencing women political participation in any electoral processes.

- Urgently address the technological glitches affecting the Harare Centre and any other centers which we may not be aware of and resume operations.

- Ensure that there are representatives attending to citizens at all their centers in line with government's directions on staff retainment during the Covid-19 pandemic.



A mock exercise by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission on the use of the biometric voter registration registration kits in Mabvuku in 2017
[Credit: NewsDay]

THE Youth Dialogue Action Network (YODAN) has embarked on a voter mobilization drive aimed at encouraging youths and women to register to vote ahead of the 2023 elections.

YODAN in voter mobilisation drive

The campaign, which is running under the theme, "Young People Can Do It", is focusing on youths and women from Chipinge urban in Manicaland province

YODAN director Catherine Mukwapati said besides mobilising the youths to register as voters, the campaign was also seeking to mobilise young people to participate as candidates in the upcoming 2023 elections.

"We are carrying a campaign

called Young People Can Do It and we launched the campaign on June 16, 2021. The campaign seeks to encourage young people to register to vote and actively participate in electoral processes as voters and candidates. We are doing this through our peace committees in Chipinge urban," said Mukwapati.

She said that meaningful youth participation was essential in pushing the democratisation and development

agenda in Zimbabwe.

"Currently, we are carrying out the campaign in Chipinge urban. For first time voters, we are encouraging them to vote and for those who have voted before, we are encouraging them to check their names on the voters' roll. Our message to young people is that they can do it and the power to change lies in them," Mukwapati said.



Voters queue to cast their ballots in Chakari in July 2017
[Credit: NewsDay]

PRIDE Mkono is a social justice activist, human rights defender and former Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition Youth Committee Chair.

Persecution in numbers:

January 14-15, 2019: Zimbabwe witnesses mass protests due to economic hardships

January 16, 2019: ZRP releases a list of wanted persons, including Mkono. The same night, his place of residence in Chitungwiza is raided by armed men who assault other tenants and his young brother.

August 14, 2019: Pride Mkono is arrested after returning from South Africa where he had travelled for a medical procedure. He is charged with subverting a constitutional government.

August 16, 2019: Mkono is remanded in custody and detained at Chikurubi Maximum

Persecution by prosecution: The case of human rights activist, Pride Mkono

Security Prison for a month.

The State pleads for six weeks to complete investigations. After almost a month, he is released on bail with conditions to report twice a week at the Police Law and Order Section

By August 2020, one year later, Mkono had appeared seven times on routine remand.

Six applications of refusal for further remand after the State had failed to indict him for the trial at the High Court were dismissed.

On July 30, 2021, he appears yet again in court almost two years after his arrest

Mkono's case highlights the weaponisation of the Judiciary to persecute dissenting voices in Zimbabwe.



Pride Mukono
[Credit: YouTube video screengrab]

PERSECUTION of rights defenders, civil society and student leaders has intensified with President Emmerson Mnangagwa failing to honor promises of a new dispensation characterised by respect for fundamental human rights.

In November 2017, after taking power following a military coup, Mnangagwa assured Zimbabweans of a new dispensation but events obtaining on the ground clearly prove his government has failed to honor the pledge.

Members and leaders of the Zimbabwe National Students Union have been among the major victims of rights violations by the Mnangagwa administration.

Zinasu president, Takudzwa Ngadziore is a victim of torture and abduction at the hands of State security agents and has had to endure several days in detention on trumped up charges.

Zinasu secretary-general Tapiwanashe Chiriga said in an interview that despite the clampdown from the State, they remain unfazed in the fight for students' rights.

"The targeted harassment and persecution of student leaders and activists in Zimbabwe has increased under the not so new dispensation especially since 2020. More than 40 student activists have been arrested, detained or harassed since March 2020

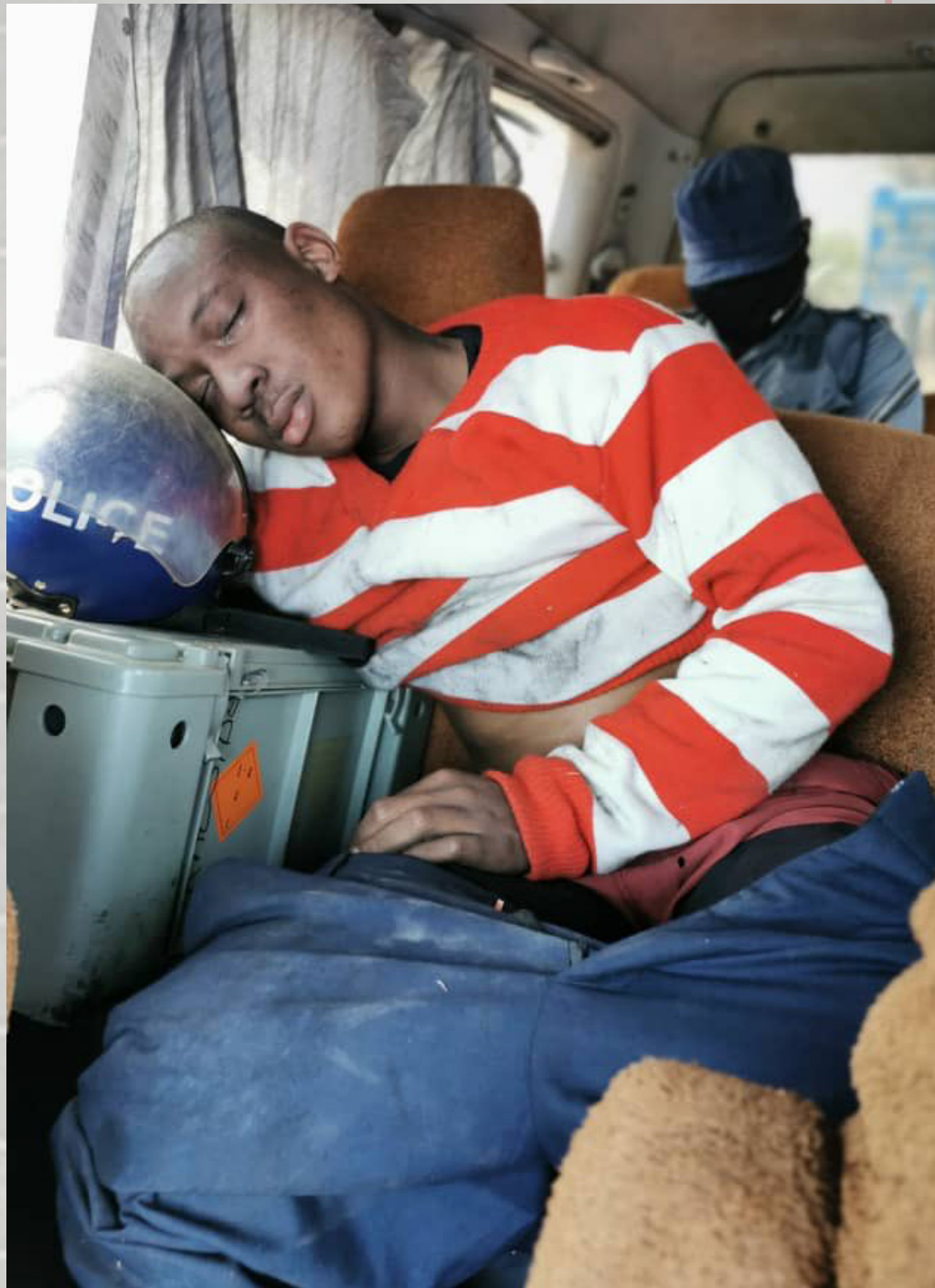
Belonging to the ONLY Students Union in Zimbabwe is not and cannot be a crime. Zinasu is not fazed by this tyrannical behaviour by the Zanu PF government and the state organs for we know that a cornered oppressor will always resort to increased repression and that can only attract increased resistance. We are strengthened and become

Zinasu undeterred by persecution

bolder each day," said Chiriga.

Quite often, the state has unleashed state security agents on student leaders protesting

against the rot at the country's tertiary institutions as well as unaffordable fees at the institutions of higher learning.



Zinasu president, Takudzwa Ngadziore
[Credit: Twitter]

Situation

THE 2012 national census results showcased that 90% of the population in Masvingo lives in rural areas.

The existing information gap between rural and urban youths in Masvingo district was appalling.

As an alternative, Cotrad established shared community access points, better known as information centers, which proved to be more economical as well as more effective in rural communities where a large rural population was facing not only network challenges but also insufficient financial resources to access necessary information.

These community information centers were established at public institutions such as clinics, schools and churches.

In ward 18, Masvingo Central constituency, the information centre was established at Shonganiso Primary School and this was during the term of office of the 2019 Shongan-

Cotrad facilitates construction of information centre

iso School Development Committee (SDC).

The information Centre was resourced with material relating to Local Government and Public Accountability as well as citizen engagement processes and other related information material.

This include but not limited to Masvingo Rural Development Council (RDC) strategic/annual plans, budgets, auditor general reports on RDCs, full council minutes, Rural and Urban Council Acts, national constitution, local newspapers, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights newsletters and parliamentary Hansard.

The 2020 SDC for Shonganiso Primary School disapproved the idea of having the information centre at the school on frivolous and vexa-

tious reasons.

The SDC alleged that the public accountability information material was political.

Response

In response, Cotrad facilitated engagements between the Accountability Action Groups (AAGs) and community leaders on online and offline platforms to map a way forward.

This included WhatsApp platforms, community dialogue meetings and community work parties.

An agreement to transfer and construct the information center at the COTRAD Mutirikwe Nursery was reached.

The community mobilised resources and Cotrad facilitated AAGs to engage the local business community to fund with building material.

Results

Local builders volunteered to build the information Centre for free.

AAGs provided free labour throughout the construction of the information center; local business leaders pledged cement, timber and roofing material.

Evidence

Below are pictures showcasing the developments upon which the Shonganiso Information Centre has progressed.



COTRAD intervention



After COTRAD intervention

THE Masvingo United Residents and Ratepayers Alliance (MURRA) has hauled five mining syndicates to court over contamination of water sources as well as destruction of houses and buildings arising from mining activities.

In the High Court application filed by MURRA, Lions Mining Syndicate, Lions2 Mining Syndicate, Bossro Mining Syndicate, Edward Arthur Hill and Great Zimbabwe Syndicate are listed as respondents.

Masvingo provincial mining director, the Masvingo City Council and the Zimbabwe Republic Police Officer Commanding Masvingo province are also listed as respondents in the High Court application by MURRA.

In an interview, MURRA spokesperson Godfrey Mtimba said they were seeking an or-

MURRA intervenes on behalf of residents, takes mining companies to court

der stopping mining activities at Target Kopje.

He said the mining activities were a huge hazard to residents.

"The mining activities are threatening the collapse of houses in Hillside and Target Kopje residential areas as

houses are developing cracks due to blasting in the mines," he said.

"The miners are also excavating gold beneath the city water tanks situated in the hills. The miners also use poisonous chemicals like cyanide that can contaminate water."



Illegal miners in Masvingo
[Credit: Sunday News]