



Wedza Human Rights Clinic Report

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (the Forum), in collaboration with its member organisation, the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (Zimrights), conducted a mobile human rights clinic in Wedza on the 15th of August 2019.

Below are the disaggregated statistics of the participants

Sex	18-35yrs	36 – 45yrs	46+	Total
Male	19	7	14	40
Female	16	3	1	20
Total	35	10	15	60

Methodology

A brief introduction of the Forum and the work it does was done highlighting that it is a coalition of 20 human rights organisations that work in various human rights fields. Zimrights underscored its work and the successes they have garnered in the communities in championing human rights causes since its formation in 1992.

An outline of the Bill of Rights in terms of the Constitution was done for the participants to understand their genesis of their human rights in the Zimbabwean context. As the Bill of rights was being explained participants took occasion to inquire on certain rights they did not clearly understand and these were elaborated to the participants. In addition, the role of duty bearers and the entitlements of duty bearers were explained to the participants.

The different avenues for obtaining redress, namely the courts, the police, the Zimbabwe Anti- Corruption Commission and the independent commissions were highlighted to the participants.

Issues

Partisan food aid and farming input distribution

It was highlighted that there had been partisan distribution of food aid and farming inputs based on political party affiliation. Moreover, residents have to travel long distances which is costly as the distribution of these inputs is done far away from where they reside.

Participants were educated on the roles of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission with regards this particular violation namely that it has the mandate to receive and consider complaints from the public and to take such action in regard to the complaints as it considers appropriate; to protect the public against abuse of power and maladministration by State and public institutions and by officers of those institutions; and to investigate the conduct of any authority or person, where it is alleged that any of the human rights and freedoms set out in the Declaration of Rights has been violated by that authority or person. As such participants were also informed that the Forum would assist them in making these complaints before the ZHRC if they provided the following:

- What was being distributed
- The source of the aid/ farming inputs (e. g donors or social welfare)
- When it was distributed
- Where it was distributed
- Who was distributing it
- The reasons they were denied aid
- Who denied them access to the aid
- Full contact details of the complainant for investigations to take place

Declined service delivery

The participants indicated that many people were facing challenges with deteriorating service delivery of basic services such as the council not providing clean, safe and potable water; and roads that were not being maintained.

The participants were informed that they were in a position to hold the local leadership to account for the services they were to provide. Participants present were encouraged to attend budget consultations by the local authorities in order that they are able to track progress as well as familiarising themselves with the duty bearers in their areas.

Recommendations

Although participants welcomed the programme and indicated that it was enlightening, they bemoaned the need to have de- centralised human rights services. They recommended that there be help desks that are located at Wedza centre which is closer to their places of residence as opposed to Marondera in light of the economic hardships making travel costs.

The participants also recommended that the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum undertake to disseminate information on its work and that of its members together with contact details through pamphlets which can be easily distributed. It was also suggested that organisations employ the use of toll free lines as telephone tariffs have since gone up and most people are now no longer able to afford to purchase airtime.

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum was also requested to make efforts in distributing the Constitution in Wedza particularly those that have been translated into Shona for easier understanding by the communities.

Wedza Mobile Human Rights Clinic Action Plan

<p>1. Distribution of the Constitution in Wedza</p>	<p>The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum will write to the Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs requesting copies of the Constitution for distribution. A further request will be made to the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission for simplified copies of the Constitution for distribution. This will be done by 31 August 2019.</p>
<p>2. Distribution of pamphlets/ brochures with Forum information and contact details.</p>	<p>The Forum will undertake to design an updated pamphlet or brochure for distribution at the anticipated legal clinics to assist communities.</p>