

## Zimbabwe: Humanitarian operations curtailed by violence

Zimbabwe's post-election violence is hampering the activities of humanitarian organisations and making the country's already dire food situation even more precarious. One-third of the population, or about four million people, are receiving food aid.



So-called war veterans; in many cases they are too young to have fought in the war. (Image: IRIN)

An official of the National Association of Non-governmental Organisations (NANGO), an umbrella body for humanitarian and civil organisations, who declined to be identified, told IRIN they were "concerned that post-election violence is brazenly denying people access to already scarce food ... It is becoming very difficult for humanitarian workers to get out there and extend food to needy communities."

Zimbabwe is expecting another poor harvest after incessant early rains were followed by a prolonged dry spell this season, coupled with a shortage of agricultural inputs and the under-utilisation of farming land by resettled farmers, all being compounded by an upswing in political violence.

The areas hardest hit by political violence, the NANGO official said, were rural communities in the districts Mutoko, Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe and Dande, in Mashonaland Central Province in northern Zimbabwe. These were once political strongholds of the ruling ZANU-PF, but had backed candidates of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in the elections on 29 March.

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