

CHAPTER 8: THE IMPACT OF THE ADOPTION OF NON-VIOLENCE RESISTANCE

This chapter critically analyses the impact of violence and nonviolent resistance on human security and development. The attempt by the MDC to use nonviolent resistance as a political strategy received mixed results on human security and development. Nonviolence served the MDC, its allies and supporters. The MDC failed to harness their doctrine in internal democratic practices. The MDC used nonviolence as a political strategy against ZANU-PF but failed the same in their internal disputes, the deep-seated factionalism in MDC showed their belief in violence to settle political scores.

The success of nonviolent resistance as a political strategy hinges on proper training of members for the use of the same. At various fora and campaign platforms the MDC preached self-restraint and non-violence. However, evidence has shown that nonviolent resistance as a political strategy was used as political rhetoric rather than a pragmatic political action. Gene Sharp (2005: 08) in his seminal writings has emphasised the importance of training to would-be nonviolent practitioners. Evidence has shown that MDC did not and does not have a practical working manual for its supporters. As Sharp (2005: 8) argues, "Non-violent struggle is identified by what people do, not by what they believe". The MDC leadership preaching on nonviolence were discordant with what their members believed in; some felt that violence should be dealt with in equal force. In Buhera South Ward 27, the general belief of the members was that they should meet violence with violence. MDC members arrested in the run up to the June 27 2008 presidential run off grouped themselves against the ZANU-PF members. MDC supporters were arrested due to the ensuing violence. The MDC splits in 2005 and 2013, respectively, were fuelled by ideological differences among the top leadership. In 2005 the party split due to a contested vote on whether the party should participate in

the reintroduced Senate. Tsvangirai lost the Executive Council vote and declared a split of the party. In 2014 after the party lost the 2013 elections the party split with one faction going along with Tenadi Biti the then Secretary General while Morgan Tsvangirai retained the larger faction of the MDC. After each split there were accusations of violence which showed that the MDC leadership and supporters were inclined towards violence. The MDC splits in 2005, 2014 and 2018 have shown the worst of the MDC violence. Various MDC leaders were brutalised during the factional disputes. Welshman Ncube, Trudy Stevenson and Job Sikhala were brutalised in 2005, while Tendai Biti and Elton Mangoma suffered the same in 2014 and in 2018 Thokozani Khupe became a victim at the hands of MDC supporters. Thus, there were contradictions in the official MDC position and internal political practices. The MDC failed to match rhetoric with practice. There was internal rupture in the MDC party. In 2005, 2008 and 2018 primary elections violence erupted between supporters of different MDC factions. Rampant factionalism in 2018 resulted in violence in Birchenough Bridge, Nyadi and Chapanduka business centre pitting the supporters of Mabika and Mudisi who were vying for the same Parliamentary seat against each other.

The MDC lacked a comprehensive working manual to achieve its nonviolent resistance. This created ambiguity in that no decisive practical actions were taught to the multitude of its supporters. In fact, the approach reflected an elite nonviolent plan where the elite preached nonviolence while the masses were left to their own devices. The success of nonviolent resistance hinges on several steps:

The first step to success in any nonviolent campaign is clearly articulated goals/objectives. These goals must be unanimous, achievable and must consider the strengths and weaknesses of the opponents. The goals help streamline, guide and secure the activities and interest of the supporters. Once the goal(s) have been set, we must proceed to select the appropriate strategies however, it is important to consider the context in which it would be applied. Strategies are very important to nonviolent struggles because it

involves a detailed articulation of the actions that would be executed in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the struggle. Nonviolent methods must be evaluated in terms of goals, effectiveness, legitimacy and appropriateness to achieve success. (Musarurwa, 2016: 140).

Due to lack of a working manual, there was no clear communication to successfully execute the nonviolent resistance. Research brought to the fore the fact that there was no working manual for practising nonviolent resistance in Buhera South Constituency. Party supporters highlighted that Tsvangirai had preached peace, therefore there was no need to be violent towards ZANU-PF supporters. In short, there was no clear and consistent pattern of disseminating information to the supporters and also between the supporters and the oppressors. Supporters of the revolution must have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of their struggles and must be able to articulate it to other people especially external parties.

Since 2000, the MDC made repeated calls for dialogue with ZANU-PF. The local systems were initiated to create lasting relations in the constituency. Human security is also about creating synergies in communities to advance shared developmental goals. The communities were used to working together in local ventures such as *nhimbe* where communities pool resources together for draught power or weeding. However, the violence within the communities strained relations thereby creating a politically polarised society. It should be noted that violence was pervasive during election time and soon after loud calls for unity, forgiveness and dialogue were initiated.

However, the calls for dialogue were often spurned as ZANU-PF accused the MDC and its leadership of being puppets of the West. The local war veterans who were champions of violence spurned all efforts for inter-party collaboration alleging that working with puppets was a non-starter. There were also different ideological underpinnings of the

political parties. ZANU-PF's revolutionary zeal and its hard stance on land created an untenable position in the relationship of the parties. The talks in 2002 failed because of the intransigent positions of the two parties. In 2004 Tsvangirai wrote:

To the new ZANU-PF leadership, I welcome you with the same old message. I am still holding out the olive branch. An opportunity for a rapid turnaround of our fortunes is still possible. Zimbabwe requires a soft landing. May I call, once again, for a search for a political solution before it is too late. We must check our national transition to realise a win-win situation. There is no way out of the crisis ... we remain deeply concerned that the grass is now so dry that any form of carelessness, in particular within the next two to three months, could lead to an inferno (*Daily Mirror*, 8 December 2004).

The dialogue offers were completely spurned by Mugabe and his party. The ZANU-PF strategy during the dialogue offers was to show bravado and pseudo machoism in the face of worsening economic and political crises. Kriger opines that:

Organised violence and intimidation of the opposition, albeit of varying intensity, has been a recurrent strategy of the ruling party before, during and after elections to punish constituencies that dared oppose it. ... Besides coercion, ZANU (PF) has also engaged in a political discourse that demonises its key opponents as reactionary, subversive, and often stooges of whites and/or foreigners (Kriger, 2005: 2).

ZANU-PF's *modus operandi* in Buhera South Constituency and, arguably, in other constituencies as well, was to portray the MDC as a sell-out outfit. It was a strategy which had been effective before. This created a difficult position for even the ruling party to embrace dialogue despite the overtures. Between 2000 and 2005 dialogue did not materialise. The ZANU-PF party preferred to talk directly to Tony Blair "puppet master". In 2005 Mugabe claimed that:

Today we tell all those calling for such ill-conceived talks to please stop misdirecting their efforts. The rest of the world knows who must be spoken to. In case they do not, we tell them here at Heroes' Acre that the man to be spoken to to make him see reason resides in Number 10 Downing Street.

This is the man to speak to and those at Harvest House [the MDC headquarters] are no more than his stooges and puppets. What does it pay us to speak to them? We would rather speak to the principal (*The Herald*, 9 August 2005).

Mugabe thereby entrenched the regime's apparatus against opponents. The political culture was reinvented to suit the liberation narrative. Despite this little acknowledgement of the MDC Tsvangirai pushed for dialogue in the national interest. The only platform from which the parties met and discussed issues of national importance was parliament. In 2007, dialogue processes began centred on the constitution making process. The Kariba draft became a defacto constitutional arrangement for the two parties. There was also an agreement on the road map to the 2008 elections. While the 2008 March elections were generally peaceful, ZANU-PF resorted to violence in the run up to the 27 June run off after sensing imminent defeat.

Despite the seemingly antagonistic position of the two parties, they later on agreed to the GNU and the constitution-making process. The major problem which affected the dialogue process from 2000 was the dominant hegemonic nature of ZANU-PF (Barnes, 2004). The 2008 dialogue, dubbed, 'talks', resulted in the Global Political Agreement and power sharing between ZANU-PF and MDC. The dialogue and agreement led to the thawing of relations as parties started to acknowledge each other. The GNU and the constitution making process had teething problems from the onset. Apparently, the mediators from SADC notably Thabo Mbeki, the then President of South Africa had been wearied by the Zimbabwean problems such that he was in a rush to find a solution to the decade long problem. The imperfections of the GNU agreement left it to manipulation by the 'gun holding' ZANU-PF. The economic meltdown which reached an unprecedented rock bottom in 2008 pushed the antagonistic parties to set aside their differences and work together. The message by Mugabe

in 2008 was consistent with his messages from the liberation era. The wartime declarations dating back to the Sikombela Declaration in 1965 (Madenga, 2016: 124) glorified war and guaranteed the supremacy of the gun.

Violence and accusations of being sellouts had become the norm in the life of the MDC. Due to the prevalence of violence, the MDC gave dialogue a chance to end the carnage from ZANU-PF. In fact, the GNU and the Unity Accord were products of the ZANU-PF political carnage. The message from Tsvangirai in 2008 became a message of peace, bringing hope to the economic downtrodden. His argument was that the road to the Zimbabwean state house should and must not be littered with dead bodies of innocent Zimbabweans.

The GNU successfully ended political violence against the MDC members. In Buhera South, the GNU created apprehension amongst MDC and ZANU-PF supporters as the former took it as an opportunity to retaliate against the atrocities perpetrated against them by the later by agreeing to work with the MDC. Mugabe managed to end the political hostility between the parties. The puppetry tag used on MDC by ZANU-PF disappeared from ZANU-PF politicians. Article X of the GNU provided for:

[T]he right to canvass and freely mobilise for political support is the cornerstone of any multi-party democratic system, the Parties have agreed that there should be free political activity throughout Zimbabwe within the ambit of the law in which all political parties are able to propagate their views and canvass for support, free of harassment and intimidation (The GPA, 2008: 13).

While cases of violence were reported from 2009, they were relatively rare. The level of intimidation considerably subsided. The MDC however faced violence from the security services. The army became an active player in both ZANU-PF and national politics. ZANU-PF used food aid as a weapon against perceived MDC supporters in the rural

areas. The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) reported that “food and other forms of aid continue to be used as a weapon to cow members of the public to submit or confirm allegiance to ZANU (PF) and that many non-ZANU (PF) members were denied farming inputs.” (*The Zimbabwean*, 12/2/2010).

The GNU in Buhera South gave a reprieve amongst MDC supporters as they managed to coexist with the ZANU-PF supporters without the threat of violence. In fact, when Tsvangirai and Mugabe began working together the residents of Buhera South constituency notably ZANU-PF supporters came to realise that they had been used against their relatives while the person they were fighting for (Mugabe) was now dining with the supposed puppet. Many MDC supporters who had deserted their villages and work stations trooped back to their villages. Those who came back were reunited with families and began working for the development of their families. In schools, teachers who had also deserted workstations returned and the education sector was resuscitated.

The belief among the MDC leadership was that the national constitution-making process was a panacea to creating a just society primed on liberty equality and fraternity. The MDC argued that the first stage in human security is creating institutions which respect human values. Most thought the constitution-making process would create strong independent institutions to stop violence. Their key demands in the new constitution were aimed at restoring the fundamental values of the liberation struggle and initiating a process of democratic transformation in Zimbabwe. Since its formation the MDC has been key in demanding a people driven constitution through the NCA. Since 1999 the NCA was a de facto constitutional making body of the MDC. In 1999 it held consultations throughout the country in preparation for its draft constitution. This civic constitutional making process was however overshadowed by the government sponsored

Constitutional Commission which came up with the 2000 draft Constitution. Through spirited campaigns the MDC and the NCA sponsored the No vote against the draft Constitutional Commission Constitution in February 2000.

From 2000, the MDC vigorously campaigned for a people-driven constitution. It opposed the Lancaster House Constitution and condemned the various amendments by ZANU-PF. These amendments were seen as self-serving and undemocratic. In 2007 the MDC clandestinely agreed on the Kariba draft with ZANU-PF. This agreement put the party on collision course with its civil society partners notably the NCA led by Lovemore Madhuku. The agreement showed that the MDC was negating on principles of its foundation. Even though it failed to see the day it also reflected on the undemocratic nature of the movement. During the GNU the MDC and ZANU-PF agreed and worked together crafting the 2013 Zimbabwe constitution. Civil Society leaders particularly the NCA, argued that the MDC actions were an “act of treachery” (*The Zimbabwe Times*, 26/09/07). The ZCTU protested that “We opposed Amendment Number 17 last year (2006) that established the senate. Now number 18 has increased the seats of the Senate to 93. Why should we support it now?” (*Financial Gazette*, 28/09/07). This showed that the MDC was deviating from the core of its constitution writing principles.

While at national level the MDC was advocating for a new constitution, the party failed to uphold its own constitutional values. The MDC leader disregarded internal democratic elections which led to splits in 2005 and 2014. The splits led to violence amongst party youths and those seen as renegades. In 2005, Trudy Stevenson was violently attacked by party youths aligned to Tsvangirai. There was a sense in the MDC that violence was acceptable within its structures to solve political problems. Disagreements attracted labelling which often led to violence. This became a political survival tactic by Morgan Tsvangirai

despite enjoying popular support from the grassroots. Other members of the MDC attacked for disagreeing with Tsvangirai were Tendai Biti, Elton Mangoma and Job Sikhala.

The trend of violence and unconstitutional usurping of political power also continued with the coming in of Nelson Chamisa as the MDC president upon the death of Morgan Tsvangirai. Firstly, Tsvangirai unconstitutionally and unilaterally appointed two vice presidents Nelson Chamisa and Elias Mudzuri outside congress. Secondly upon Tsvangirai's death, Chamisa unconstitutionally took over power sidelining the elected Thokozani Khupe from the presidency. Those opposed to Chamisa were either violently silenced or expelled from the party. The above shows the pretentious constitutionalism of the MDC.

The MDC utilised legal challenges to resist the oppressive rule in Zimbabwe. From its formation, the MDC relied on the interpretation of the law whenever aggrieved. In 2000 the MDC challenged the parliamentary results and won in the High Court, however, appeals by the ZANU-PF member quickly dented the MDC celebrations. In a clear travesty of justice, no judgement has been delivered up to date for the 2002 election appeal against Mugabe victory. Whenever unfavourable judgements were passed against ZANU-PF, Mugabe threatened the judiciary with unspecified action. In 2005 Mugabe urged ZANU-PF members to act as if nothing had happened despite a court ruling. He said, "I don't understand the court's decision. We can't be held to ransom by a man who is in prison. That is absolute nonsense. We will study the decision and appeal against it. He (Bennett) has a case to answer. Rambai muchienderera mberi (Proceed as if nothing has happened). Rwendo runo tinoda kutsvaira (This time around we are determined to sweep every seat.)" (*The Herald*, 17/04/2005). As a result of such threats, the judge was forced to suspend his own judgement because of political interference (Zimbabwe Human Rights Forum, 11/2005: 11).

The MDC utilised the justice system to fight the oppressive government machinery which apparently was in collusion with ZANU-PF to stifle democratic processes. The party approached the High court contesting the outcome of the 2000 Parliamentary election results. The victory it scored was short-lived following appeals by ZANU-PF to the Supreme Court. Mugabe and the war veterans resorted to hounding Judges deemed unfavourable to them out office, notable among them, Justice Gubbay. In fact, violence was imported from the political field to the judiciary. The MDC also spent considerable time in courts with disgruntled party members. This created multiple focus areas in its political fights. The MDC often argued that the courts are captured by the ZANU-PF regime however it became a paradox when the party went to the same courts for adjudication.

Political insecurity created a demand for security sector reforms. The vagaries of political violence led by the security service threatened development and human security. Since 2000 the MDC had been calling for security sector reforms. Their rallying call was that members of the security sector particularly the army and the CIO should either stay in barracks or join politics fulltime. These calls failed to depoliticise the army because most of the senior members of the military were war veterans whose allegiance was to ZANU-PF first and the nation second. There is the need to “train and educate both the security personnel and the ordinary citizens on issues of governance, security sector reforms and the dangers of authoritarian rule. Furthermore, there is a “strong call for partnership with the media in promoting the concept of security sector reforms” (Sharp, 2003).

The MDC failed to influence the security sector reforms both in and outside government. Mugabe flatly refused tampering with the security sector which left the army and the CIO fully controlled by ZANU-PF. There was also fear of the military by the ordinary people. The army

actively campaigned for ZANU-PF in the elections since 2000 and it carried out various operations in the rural areas whose main motive was to canvass for support for the ruling party. There was need for training and education of both the ordinary people and the army to achieve the desired reforms. Musarurwa (2016) opines that:

The training must clarify on the continuous significance between the liberation struggle and the security sector reform. It must come out clean that it will not eradicate that part of the history... In order for security forces to change the way they view themselves and the nexus between them and the ruling party, demonstrates the need to transform their mind-sets through intensive training or education on sector reform. This kind of training will eradicate the wrong misconceptions that they have about this noble cause of security sector reforms.

The MDC failed to come up with a proper security reform manual to help them achieve transformative peace building. On his part, Mugabe rewarded the security sector with trinkets and appointments in crucial government portfolios. The army was key and instrumental in ZANU-PF politics as Constantino Chiwenga regarded it as the stockholders of the revolution.

Since 2000 the MDC has managed to internationalise and create a legitimacy crisis for ZANU-PF. The internationalisation of the Zimbabwean politics has become a nonviolent tool for political change. In the initial years of MDC formation ZANU-PF resorted to uncouth violent politics claiming to preserve liberation war gains. The MDC international campaigns yielded results as the violence was drastically reduced. Machaya (2016) opined that “continued systematic use of violence, intimidation and rigging has run its full course and there is no way a government that continues to rely on unorthodox means to retain power can continue to enjoy ‘widespread acceptance’ both internally and externally”. While the violence of the 1980s and the 1990s worked in its favour, the years after 2000 witnessed a drastic change in the world view of international politics. The violence during

the land reform and the election period in 2000 and 2002 clearly alienated ZANU-PF from international sympathisers. This resulted in the imposition of sanctions against ZANU-PF officials and some state enterprises.

ZANU-PF even attempted to seek "legitimacy through the back door by approaching the General Court of the European Union seeking the invalidation of the sanctions imposed by the EU" (SW *Radio* 17/06/2014). As pointed out by Weber "the basis of every system of authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a belief, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige" (Weber, 1964: 382). While people had faith in ZANU-PF prior to 2000 because of tradition, the charisma of Mugabe and some level of liberation trust in the past, the post 2000 period clearly marked the dwindling support base for ZANU-PF. The ZANU-PF leadership had not anticipated this development, hence they resorted to violence to maintain their stranglehold on power. Even though it constantly won elections from 2000, the fact that the victories were questioned was a major cause for concern. The various reports from election observers also dented ZANU-PF credibility requirements. In the long run the lack of legitimacy forced ZANU-PF into a negotiated settlement with the MDC which it had long loathed as puppets of the West.

In politics, power and governance legitimacy is crucial for acceptance by both internal and external groups. Between 2000 and 2017 Mugabe ruled with authority but lacked legitimate power. In the same vein Mnangagwa has used authority at the expense of legitimacy in his rule. Legitimacy shows that the basis and foundation of any government power come from the electorate. In the intervening period the lack of legitimacy became the basis of violence as ZANU-PF coerced people to support its rule. However, this failed to hold in the long run as ZANU-PF was forced to tone down its hard line stance to accommodate MDC.

It was also forced to make concessions which it could not have done. In Leslie Green's view "Coercion threats provide secondary, reinforcing motivation when the political order fails in its primary normative technique of authoritative guidance" (Green, 1988: 75). Through electoral violence, intimidation and coercion ZANU-PF failed the legitimacy test, thus it was not internationally accepted. Accounts that emphasize political participation or political influence regard a political decision as legitimate if it has been made in a process that allows for equal participation of all relevant persons. MDC managed to play the legitimacy card as opposed to responding through violence, the international community through election observers failed to acknowledge the electoral victories of ZANU-PF. In the 2002, 2008 and 2018 elections, the majority of the observers were not satisfied with the way elections were conducted in Zimbabwe.

In the 2018 elections, the MDC raised irregularities during the voting process which dented the ZANU-PF victory. President Mnangagwa's reign has also been hampered by a legitimacy crisis. In a Workers Day, address the MDC Vice President Welshman Ncube said that:

The nation must just unite to fight a single battle which is the illegitimacy crisis of the current government led by Mnangagwa. To that end, I want to reiterate that Mnangagwa's all other efforts to restore economic prosperity will not succeed as long as the legitimacy crisis of this country that was given birth by stolen elections last year is not resolved. Mnangagwa must set aside all the other efforts and sit down with Chamisa to resolve this illegitimacy crisis. That is the only way things can start moving and that is the only way the other hardships, especially the economic problems can be put to rest (*Pindula News*, /2019/05/03).

The MDC utilised the courts through a Constitutional Court application to challenge the 2000, 2002 and 2018 elections. While the courts action failed politically the exposed the irregularities in the manner in which the whole electoral process was carried out. They managed to delegitimise Mugabe and Mnangagwa's victory. In the end

the EU also noted with grave concern the eruption of violence and occurrence of serious human rights violations following the peaceful election of 30 July 2018. "These tragic events stand in sharp contrast to the high hopes and expectations for a peaceful, inclusive, transparent and credible election in Zimbabwe" (*The Zimbabwe Independent*, 10/08/2018).

The MDC managed to work with various Civil Society groups to document and amplify ZANU violence and atrocities in the country. The civil society groups became the voice of the people in the face of political polarisation. The NGO's were grouped under the banner of the Crisis Coalition in Zimbabwe (CCZ) which collectively lobbied the international community to aid Zimbabweans suffering from state sponsored violence. The CCZ draws:

Its membership draws from churches, women's groups, social movements, residents' associations, labour unions, human rights lawyers, teachers' groups and health professionals...The organization's vision is to see a democratic Zimbabwe, and believes civil society has a critical role to play in nurturing and sustaining a culture of respect for principles and values of good governance, openness and accountability within Zimbabwean society. To this end, it enjoyed international attention as one of Zimbabwe's biggest and most vocal pro-democracy advocacy groups in the country (*Crisis in Zimbabwe*, 2005).

The civil society became the backbone of societal transformation in terms of rights, amplifying the voice of the common man as well providing the much needed developmental relief. Most people in the rural areas used organisations such as the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human rights to fight unjust police brutality, getting restitution from violence perpetrators. This served as a message to would be violence sponsors. In ward 27 in Buhera South, Julius Chivandire successfully reclaimed his goats taken as punishment for supporting the MDC during the 2008 June 27 runoff. This opened the floodgates for further action by MDC supporters. While some could not get the desired

results however it also lessened the scourge of violence in the 2003 and 2018 elections.

From its formation the MDC enjoyed widespread support across the country. Results of the 2000 parliamentary elections showed that the party enjoyed popular support across the country. In 2000 the following rural seats went to the MDC Seke, Mhondoro, Chimanimani, Chipinge North, Mutare North, Mutare South, Mutasa, Nyanga, Gweru Rural, Silobela, Bikita West and 13 seats in rural Matabeleland. This was despite the fact that there was political violence which claimed 30 lives, over 100 people were injured, and at least 6500 were displaced and substantial damage was caused to property. However, in the following elections the trend drastically changed as most people began voting for ZANU-PF largely because of the prevalence of violence instigated by ZANU-PF. The MDC however continued to preach peace in the face of atrocities committed by ZANU-PF.

Nonviolent resistance has failed as a political tool for change to bring the rural vote to the MDC. The MDC has repeatedly failed to canvass support due to the prevalence of the Militia in most rural areas. The failure of the MDC to gain political power has been attributed mostly to success of ZANU-PF intimidation in rural areas. Buhera South was used by ZANU-PF as an outpost of violence. The rural population was easy to control because of the nature of their old and traditional system in which village heads are prominent political players. ZANU-PF deliberately elevated village leaders such as Chiefs to de facto political players and mobilisers. The chiefs were used in registration of people for drought relief along political party lines. As a result, there were many cases where MDC members were victimised and failed to get drought relief unless they denounced their membership. During voting, the village heads were required to monitor the voting patterns off their subjects in the 2008 elections. The rural voters were required to submit their voters slip serial numbers to the Chiefs, village Heads

or ZANU-PF party agents. The *Newzimbabwe.com* website reported that:

The pattern of suspicious numbers of assisted voters was first observed in the 2013 elections which were won overwhelmingly by ZANU-PF. Those who were assisting the voters were a group of known ZANU-PF activists who walked in and out of the polling station... To make a circus of the process, voters, including those who were claiming to be illiterate, would later be required to append signatures onto a separate polling station book, something which they did free of any hassles. Further investigations revealed that ZANU-PF had a well-choreographed voting system in which traditional leaders dragged dozens of their people to station some 500 metres outside polling centres. The chief would release his people in batches to go and vote in a particular order. In some cases, ZANU-PF used headmen as polling agents. Their job was to ensure the people who were told to ask for assistance comply with the instructions and follow the order. "At Chireya primary school in Mashonaland East, headmen Michael Tupe, Simon Ruvura and Givemore Nehurambe were ZANU-PF polling agents," said ZPP. According to the poll based NGO, Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network (ZESN), this was more marked in ZANU-PF stronghold rural Mashonaland areas. In 2013, some 97 voters out of 370 were assisted to vote at one polling station in Muzarabani, 77 out of 374 at a second station and 85 out of 374 at a third station. In Muzarabani North, more than half of the 17 400 voters were assisted. (*NewZimbabwe.com*, 15/03/2019).

ZANU-PF shifted its ideological position from open violence to smart intimidation which was difficult to prove. MDC members were victims of this structural violence carried out in the rural areas. MDC doctrine of nonviolence failed to help the party gain votes and traction in the rural areas. Attempts by the MDC to protest to ZEC against these anomalies failed because the electoral body distanced itself from that by arguing "If at all these things happened then they happened outside our polling stations and in that case we had no jurisdiction over them. All those who were not able to vote on their own due to illiteracy or physical impairment were allowed to bring trusted persons of their choice to assist them for as long as those helpers were above 18 years of age" (*NewZimbabwe.com*, 19/03/2019).

One critical finding of the study is that human security is compromised in areas affected by violence. This therefore retards human development. Findings showed deep deprivation of basic life necessities. A notable finding is that most were deeply affected in agricultural production and therefore food security. While Buhera South is in agriculture region five, the MDC supporters were even further exposed to hunger as they could not access inputs. The adoption of nonviolent resistance reduced the spread and virulence of political violence against MDC supporters. Since 2009 the MDC members were not victims of direct violence, but of structural violence. They were left out in in most government funded economic activities such as agricultural support schemes and cooperatives funded by the government departments. Those who got support did so mostly through relatives in government. Most members have accepted that the government will not come to their rescue because of their political affiliation.

In the thesis, the level of insecurity was felt because “human security connects different types of freedoms – freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one’s own behalf. To do this, it offers two general strategies: protection and empowerment. Protection shields people from dangers” (Annan, 2003a). This lack became a common occurrence to the MDC supporters and leadership as “it requires concerted effort to develop norms, processes and institutions that systematically address insecurities. Empowerment enables people to develop their potential and become full participants in decision making. Protection and empowerment are mutually reinforcing, and both are required in most situations” (Annan, 2003a). MDC members were grossly disenfranchised economically and politically.

In some instances, due to insecurity there was a problem of refugees migrating to South Africa for protection. The violence of 2000, 2002 and 2008 drove many young people to neighbouring countries for

security reasons. The most common destination was South Africa, only a few preferred to go to Mozambique and Botswana. One elderly parent lamented the breakdown of his family as the children who left have vowed never to come back unless there is a change of government. He lamented that “vana vangu varamwa nyika zvese neni baba vavo, vakasiya vati hatidzoki kusvika nyika yanaka yave nehutongi huzere” that can be translated to mean (my children have deserted both the country and the family, they have vowed never to come back unless the government changes) (interview with MDC AY official 13/02/22). Security is a political issue which requires the political will of a political society and an entity. The issue of displacement as opined by Baysoy (2018: 21) shows that “in this sense, security is not safety. It refers to a situation and an act in which a political society is secure physically and mentally”.

Nonviolent resistance is a panacea for development and human security. It shields supporters against violent opponents. It saves society from open and total destruction. The MDC scored notable successes in the struggle for democracy and democratisation in Zimbabwe. It has been noted that the success of nonviolent resistance is not measured by ballot success but the influence which it has on the people and the impact on the lives of the people. The approach helped to amplify the struggle in Zimbabwe. The MDC approach helped in transforming conflict in Buhera South. It reduced the levels of direct violence, however the MDC members remained victims of structural violence and inequalities. Thus, while violence subsided, oppression and disempowerment continued. The next chapter provides the summary, recommendations and conclusions of the thesis.