



## **Zimbabwe – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 9 June 2016**

### **Information on attacks on homosexuals in Zimbabwe.**

The 2015 US Department of State country report on Zimbabwe, in a section titled “Acts of Violence, Discrimination, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity”, states:

“Religious leaders in this traditionally conservative and Christian society encouraged discrimination against LGBTI persons. In March, Walter Magaya, leader of the Healing and Deliverance Ministries, stated that gays and lesbians were ‘spiritually afflicted and just like all evil spirits, they need deliverance.’ LGBTI persons reported widespread societal discrimination based on sexual orientation. In response to social pressure, some families reportedly subjected their LGBTI members to ‘corrective’ rape and forced marriages to encourage heterosexual conduct. Women in particular were subjected to rape by male family members. Victims rarely reported such crimes to police. LGBTI persons often left school at an early age due to discrimination and had higher rates of unemployment and homelessness. Many persons who identified themselves as LGBTI did not seek medical care for sexually transmitted diseases or other health problems due to fear that health providers would shun them or report them to authorities. (US Department of State (13 April 2016) *2015 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Zimbabwe*, pp.42-43)

A report published by the Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe states:

“The reported violations committed against LGBT people decreased just slightly in 2014 to 41, down from 46 in 2012-2013. Of all the violations reported in 2014, the proportion of hate crimes committed against individuals identifying as gay was higher, at 21 cases, followed by transgender (12 cases) then lesbian (7 cases). New forms of violations emerged from the reports, for example Displacement, a situation wherein a number of the violations perpetrated against LGBT people e.g outing, invasion of privacy and threats often culminate in their being forced to relocate from their usual or preferred place of residence. Majority of displacements documented in this report occurred in ways that the complainants were forced out of their family home, after having been outed and possibly disowned. In other cases, the complainants were falsely accused of having committed some sort of infraction as a way to solicit bribes.” (Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ) (1 December 2015) *Violations Report 2014*, p.7)

In a paragraph headed “Dealing with an outing is reporting it to the police” this report states:

“There was an interesting but disturbing trend observed wherein some families of newly outed LGBTs dealt with their discovery by reporting their

'deviant' family member to the police. In a majority of cases, the police would just temporarily detain the complainant and ridicule or threaten them while they were in custody. However they would eventually release them, as they could not formally charge them, especially if they had not been caught committing any actual crime. However, outing in many cases led to subsequent disownment or displacement of the complainant. It is clear that in many cases, families, friends or neighbors of LGBT people do not know how to handle their 'discovery' and often resort to very illogical actions, such as reporting an individual to the police for being homosexual. in trying to exert their bigotry." (ibid, p.13)

An article published on the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) website states:

"Chitungwiza police are investigating a vicious street attack on a lesbian. The Gays and Lesbian Association of Zimbabwe (GALZ) says the woman, who has not been named, had earlier been insulted at a local bar where she was in the company of a female 'friend'. The woman, described as in her 20s, was 'punched in the stomach and pushed to the floor' by two men who also kicked her. 'One of the men broke a bottle of beer on her head,' a GALZ statement said on Wednesday. She underwent treatment for her injuries at Chitungwiza General Hospital." (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) (23 September 2011) *Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ) Speak Out About Attack on Lesbian*)

An article from New Zimbabwe states:

"Armed men left 35 people injured after they stormed a gay party and beat up guests in Harare over the weekend, Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ) organisation has claimed. GALZ said its members were attacked by a dozen of unidentified men who gate crashed the organization's party which was held at a private venue in the capital. The gay community holds its meetings in private in fear of the country's laws which criminalize their homosexual activities. Chesterfield Samba, the GALZ director, said over 12 unidentified armed men forced themselves into the party venue and attacked them. 'They were in three vehicles when they arrived and one of them produced a pistol and threatened our security team that was manning the gate for denying them access. Upon entering they started beating people using logs, iron bars, empty beer bottles and clenched fists,' Samba said. He added: 'The men also demanded cash and gadgets from the members as they were attacking them. As a result of the attacks over 35 of our members suffered injuries.'" (New Zimbabwe (22 December 2014) *35 injured as armed men attack gays*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

## References:

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