AMANI TRUST

Preliminary Report of a Survey on Internally Displaced Persons from Commercial Farms in Zimbabwe.

A report prepared by the Mashonaland Programme of the AMANI Trust.

31 MAY 2002

MASHONALAND PROGRAMME
Suite 3
1 Raleigh Street
Kopje
Harare, Zimbabwe

POST:
P O Box 5465
Harare

CONTACT:
Tel: (263-04) 792 222, 737 509
Fax: (263-04) 731 660
email: amani@ echo.icon.co.zw
http://www.oneworld.org/amani

This work was supported by the British High Commission, the Royal Norwegian Embassy, the Swedish Embassy, and USAID.

1. INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe is experiencing a massive humanitarian crisis. The past two years have seen a record of deteriorating human rights, and the consequent social turmoil has led to an increasing number of internally displaced people in the country. Violence against the major opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), has been well documented both locally and internationally[1]. In the pre-election period, there was widespread intimidation, assault, and politically motivated killings, carried out mainly by "war veteran" militia, youth militia, and supporters of the ruling party, Zanu(PF)[2]. While some of the "war veterans" are indeed genuine members of the liberation struggle of the 1970's in Zimbabwe, there are also a larger group of unemployed youths who have become involved in the organised violence and torture (OVT). Although much of the OVT has centred around issues related to the many elections held over the past two years, there have been equally as much OVT during the land disturbances. A large number of allegations have been made about OVT targeted at both the farm owners and the farm workers[3]. As indicated above, there are a plethora of reports on the OVT, but little of this deals with the direct evidence from the commercial farms. In particular, there are few scientific reports on the experiences of OVT and the effects upon commercial farm workers.

The months following the Presidential Elections of 9 – 11 March 2001 have been marked by widespread recriminations against the opposition party members, and intensified action against the farm owners and farm workers. The continuing violence has meant that farm workers and MDC supporters have been forced to flee their homes to escape harassment, assault, and, in the worst cases, death. Farm workers often have no other home except on the farm, having either being born there, or being of foreign descent, mainly Malawian or Zambian. The farms, as well as providing accommodation and employment for these people, also allowed the farm workers access to medical care and schooling for their children.

On the farms listed for acquisition and settled by the "war veterans", the farm workers have been subjected to continual intimidation, theft of personal belongings, vandalism, and destruction of their homes. Before the elections, they were forced to attend all night rallies for 'voter education' by Zanu(PF) supporters, and after the elections they were punished with violence for continuing to live and work on the farms, which was seen as supporting the MDC and the white farmers. The farm workers either then leave rather than live side by side with their new neighbours, or are forced to leave by violence, in some instances with only the clothes on their backs. The police and the army, far from trying to protect the rights of the farm workers are often part of the problem, standing to the side when violence erupts on the farm, and continuing to harass the displaced farm workers, once they have left for the urban centres and refuge. There are even instances of senior police officers and army generals acquiring farms themselves and depriving the farm workers of their homes and employment.

As mentioned above, there has been a relative dearth of hard information on the effects of the farm invasions on commercial farm workers. The AMANI Trust has seen relatively few

---

[1] **See** *AMANI TRUST (2002), Organised Violence and Torture in the June 2000 General Election in Zimbabwe, HARARE: AMANI TRUST; AMANI TRUST (2002), Neither Free nor Fair: High Court decisions on the petitions on the June 2000 General Election, HARARE: AMANI TRUST; Analysis of Zimbabwe Presidential Election, March 9th, 10th, and 11th 2002, in Terms of SADC Parliamentary Forum Electoral Recommendations, First Edition: 14 March 2002, AMANI TRUST (MATABELELAND), ZIMBABWE; NETWORK OF INDEPENDENT MONITORS, (KWAZULU NATAL) SOUTH AFRICA; PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (DENMARK); AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL (2000), Zimbabwe: Terror tactics in the run-up to the parliamentary elections, June 2000, LONDON: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL; IRCT (2000), Organised Violence and Torture in Zimbabwe, Harare and Copenhagen, 6th June 2000, COPENHAGEN: IRCT; IRCT/RCT (2001), Organised election violence in Zimbabwe 2001, COPENHAGEN: IRCT & RCT; IRCT (2001), Organised Violence and Torture in Zimbabwe, Harare and Copenhagen, 24 May 2001, COPENHAGEN: IRCT.*

[2] **See** *AMANI TRUST (2002), The Presidential Election and the Post-Election Period in Zimbabwe, HARARE: AMANI TRUST.*

[3] **See** *Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2001), Politically motivated violence in Zimbabwe 2000–2001. A report on the campaign of political repression conducted by the Zimbabwean Government under the guise of carrying out land reform, HARARE: ZIMBABWE HUMAN RIGHTS NGO FORUM; Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2001), Evaluating the Abuja Agreement, HARARE: ZIMBABWE HUMAN RIGHTS NGO FORUM; Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2001), Evaluating the Abuja Agreement: Two Months Report, HARARE: ZIMBABWE HUMAN RIGHTS NGO FORUM.*

commercial farm workers amongst the victims of organised violence and torture seen in the past two years, but the numbers have been increasing over the past six months. As the pace of land acquisitions has accelerated, so have the numbers of farm workers displaced, but it is clear that there is no hard information on the actual numbers.

The Amani Trust carried out a survey in early May 2002 of a group of one hundred and thirty nine commercial farm workers displaced from Marondera (Mashonaland East region). These workers had been forcibly removed from their homes on the farms and prevented from working by 'war veterans' and Zanu(PF) supporters. In the process, they had faced harassment and physical violence, as well as losing all their belongings. They were all given temporary refuge by the Amani Trust, and are now being assisted by other non-governmental organisations in Harare.

This preliminary report was predicated by the need to provide some hard information on the issues faced by displaced commercial farm workers. It was not the intention that this survey provide any estimate of the numbers, but rather to provide some qualitative data on the population in question. A detailed interview form was used, covering a variety of areas, and this took about one hour to complete. Experienced nurses were used as the interviewers, and they were all given basic orientation and training prior to being deployed.

A more detailed report will be available in due course, but this preliminary report is being released in view of the urgency to provide hard information for current planning on internally-displaced persons (IDPs).

2. HISTORY OF THE DISPLACEMENTS

The displaced persons came from 5 commercial farms, but the majority came from two farms, as follows:

- Chipesa Farm 87
- Chakadenga Farm 38
- Hind Farm 1
- Kesela Farm 3
- Melara Farm 9

2.1 Chipesa Farm, Marondera

There have been war veterans living on this farm since 2000. In that time, as well as the farm owners being harassed and assaulted, the farm workers have had their houses burnt and rebuilt several times, and have had to live and work in conditions of fear and assault. On the 15th of March, war veterans and ZANU(PF) supporters, some driving Zanu(PF) District Development Fund vehicles, went to the compound and fields, where the paprika crop was being harvested and rounded up the workers. A tractor driver was assaulted along with other farm workers who were beaten for resisting. They were accused of supporting the MDC and were told that the owner of the arm was going to be killed. The farm workers led to nearby hills where they hid for several days before seeking food and shelter at a nearby farm. They were then ferried into Harare where they were given food and shelter.

2.2 Chakadenga Farm, Marondera

On the 10th of April resident war veterans and Zanu(PF) youths were went to the farm compound, and fields and told the workers that they were now the owners of the farm. They accused the workers of supporting the MDC and told them that they had 20 minutes to pack their belongings and vacate the farm. In the ensuing pandemonium, several workers were assaulted. Not all of them had time to take possessions so many had to leave with the clothes they were wearing. They were taken by tractor to bus stops and told to wait for buses there. It was raining, and they slept in the open for several days before local farmers made arrangements for their food and shelter, eventually taking them to Harare to the Amani Trust offices.

3. METHODOLOGY

Members of the Amani Trust clinical team interviewed 139 internally displaced people. These refugees were being housed in two tented camps at Cleveland Dam and Coronation Park. Questions in the survey covered demographics, a medical assessment of their past and current condition, the farm workers experience of violence, a narrative of their story in their own words and finally a list of their material losses and resources available to them.

The interview form drew strongly on a protocol originally developed by the AMANI Trust in its work with survivors of organised violence and torture from the Liberation War of the 1970s[4]. It was slightly adapted for the present survey, but generally covers the issues regarding torture that are recommended in the Istanbul Protocol recently adopted by the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights of the United Nations.

4. RESULTS

Results of the questionnaire are displayed with both the actual figures and as a rounded up percentage of the total number of cases.

4.1 Demographics

As can be seen from the table below, there were more men than women in the sample, but this survey did manage to include a reasonable percentage of women. This is important because political violence against women is widely reported anecdotally, and there is generally little concrete information on women from the current violence.

Sex	Number	Percentage
Male	80	58%
Female	59	42%

The data regarding marital status are unremarkable in most ways, with most being married as might have been expected in a group from a “settled” population. Most commercial farm workers have been resident on farms for many years, and even grow up in families that were resident on commercial farms.

Marital Status	Number	Percentage
Married	87	63%
Single	34	24%
Divorced	15	11%
Widowed	3	2%

Out of the people who had or were still married, 90 cases were traditional marriages, 1 was polygamous, and 2 were church/civil marriages.

Type of employment	Number	Type of employment	Number
Farm labourers	91 (65%)	Gardener/tailor	1
Farm guards	4	Grader	1
Cattle herders	5	Horticultural worker	1
Foremen	6	Flower cutter	1
Supervisors	2	Irrigation foreman	1
Tractor drivers	2	Irrigator	1
Carpenter	1	Gardener	1
Clerks	2	Mechanic	1
Sprayer	2	Orchard supervisor	1
Unknown	15		

[4] **See** *AMANI (1997), Assessment of the Consequences of Torture and Organised Violence: A manual for field workers, (revised), HARARE:AMANI.*

As can be seen from the table above, the sample reported a wide variety of occupations within the commercial farms, but labourers were in the vast majority.

4.2 Experience of violence

A very high percentage (71%) reported an experience of torture or repressive violence, whilst 90 cases, or 65%, had had some experience of torture or repressive violence prior to the present episode. As was seen from the history reported above, the most recent episode was associated with their displacement. The sample also reported that many adults in their family had witnessed their torture. Here, 82 cases, or 59%, had had other adults witness their torture, and this was usually a spouse. Other family members were also reported as having experienced violence: 76 cases, or 55%, had a similar experience to the interviewee.

More disturbingly, children were not exempt. The interviewees reported that children in their families had witnessing the violence in 77 cases, or 55%. The sample reported having a total of 865 children between them, with 527 children still resident on the farms.

4.2.1 Physical Assaults

As can be seen from the table below, physical assaults was common, with beatings of one kind or other the most common. This table does not give the frequencies with which the sample experienced assaults, and this will be given in the fuller report. The frequencies are important however as these persons reported more than one encounter with organised violence and torture.

Type of assault	Number	Percentage
Slapping or kicking or punching	46	33%
Blows with rifle butts, sticks, whips or irons	58	42%
Exposure to extreme cold or heat	39	28%
Hanging or suspension	10	7%
Prolonged standing or crouching	28	20%
Submarine, immersion, asphyxiation, strangling	6	4%
Burning	5	4%
Electrical shocks	1	1%
Rape	4	3%

4.2.2 Deprivation

The forms of deprivation seen in the table below relate partly to the effects of the displacement itself, when people were forcibly moved off the farms from which they came. However, some of the forms of deprivation were experienced at the same time as people were assaulted or at during the forced attendance at “pungwes” (see Section 6 below).

Type of deprivation	Number	Percentage
Deprived of food, comfort or communication	72	52%
Incommunication, minimal food and comfort, overcrowding	53	38%
Lack of water (more than 48 hours)	36	26%
Immobilization, restraint, total darkness (more than 48 hours)	34	24%
Lack of sleep (less than 4 hours per night) or 5 days or longer	52	37%
Lack of needed medication or medical care or more than 48 hours	27	19%

4.2.3 Sensory over-stimulation

Sensory overstimulation seems to be more frequently reported than in previous studies. It is clear that the high report relates to organised violence at “pungwes” or other forced meetings, or is seen as the concomitant of the displacement process which was clearly traumatic as seen from the history above (also see Section 6 below).

Type of sensory over-stimulation	Number	Percentage
Constant noises	61	44%
Screams and voices	76	55%
Powerful lights	5	4%
Constant lighting	3	2%
Special devices	4	3%
Drugs	0	0%

4.2.4 Psychological torture and ill-treatment

Psychological torture is frequently underestimated, both in the frequency of its occurrence and in its effects. Here it needs to strongly stressed that the most serious long-term consequence of OVT is psychological disorder. Many studies, including those from Zimbabwe, have established very high rates of psychological disorder following torture. Most commonly reported are high rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, but other forms of disorder, such as depression, are also commonly seen. In terms of the frequency of psychological torture, it is important to recognise that this can be both a form of torture on its own, which is highly damaging, but also a nearly always present during physical torture. It is also important to note that the witnessing of torture, especially when the victim is forced to be present when a loved one or familiar is tortured, is equally damaging. Here the findings under the introduction to Section 4 should be noted.

Type of psychological torture and ill-treatment	Number	Percentage
Verbal abuse	118	85%
Threats against person	114	82%
False accusations	115	83%
Abuse with excrement	38	27%
Sexual abuse (without violence)	20	14%
Menaces against own life and family	70	50%
Simulated execution	24	17%

As is seen from the table above, very high rates of psychological torture are reported by the sample, with high percentages for nearly all categories of psychological torture.

4.3 Witnessing violence, ill-treatment or torture

As mentioned in Section (4.2.4), witnessing of OVT should note be underestimated, either for its occurrence or its effects.

4.3.1 Cases where the person has witnessed assaults: 109 (78%)

As can be seen from the table below, the pattern of witnessing assaults bears a strong correspondence to the pattern reported for assaults themselves. The witnessing of Beatings are most commonly reported, but, interestingly, the witnessing of rape is 5 times more common than the experience. Rape is generally under-reported, and follow-up on the cases reported above will allow us to understand whether this high percentage of witnessing of rape represents an under-reporting of rape or is due to the rapes occurring publicly. Public rape has been reported in other Zimbabwean cases as a form of torture.

Type of assault witnessed	Number	Percentage
Slapping, kicking or punching	68	49%
Blows with rifle butt, sticks, whips or irons	90	65%
Hanging or suspension	15	11%
Prolonged standing or crouching	32	23%
Submarine, immersion, asphyxiation, strangling	14	10%
Burning	9	6%
Electrical shocks	1	1%
Rape/sexual abuse	19	14%

4.3.2 Cases where the person has witnessed executions: 46 (33%)

Two deaths were reported by this sample, and, as can be seen from the table below, a significant percentage reported witnessing the beating to death of a farm worker by a soldier, whilst a smaller percentage reported seeing the shooting of a policeman. This latter incident was widely reported in 2000. It is unclear whether the other categories relate to these incidents, or other unreported deaths.

Type of executions	Number	Percentage
Beating	36	26%
Shooting	13	9%
Stabbing/cutting	3	2%
Hanging, strangling	8	6%
Burning	4	3%

5. SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

This section deals with the affiliations of the sample. Clearly any political affiliation has been highly problematic in the past two years, and there have numerous public accusations that commercial farmers and commercial farm workers. Thus, it was important to examine to what extent this accusation is accurate, although it is clear that political affiliation to any political party in a constitutional right and certainly no justification for persecution or torture.

There were 66 cases, or 47%, where the person was a supporter, or member of an organisation that became persecuted. 57 cases, or 41%, described themselves as active supporters or members of a political organisation. A further 9 cases, or 6%, described themselves as members of a religious group.

Of the 57 people who supported a political organisation, 41 (72%) did not state their political affiliation, 11 (19%) were Zanu(PF) and 5 (9%) were MDC. Clearly the sample were fearful of describing their political affiliation.

6. VIOLENCE ANALYSIS:

This section is based upon the narrative histories or organised violence and torture given by the interviewees during the general interview.

The farm workers in the pre-election period were forced to attend all night rallies held by the ‘war veterans’ and Zanu(PF) supporters. At these rallies, the people were forced to stand for long periods of time, in cold temperatures and rain, and were forced to chant Zanu(PF) slogans and dance. Those who did not comply were beaten or forced to behave in a degrading and humiliating manner, an example of this being men forced into sexual acts with each other or forced to imitate sexual acts with the ground, whilst their wives were forced to watch. The farm workers were prevented from sleeping, deprived of food and water for long periods of time, and faced a barrage of accusations concerning their supposed support for the MDC.

Specific forms of assault mentioned by the farm workers included being pricked with forks, having crushing pressure applied to their genitals, and being forced to stand upside down

whilst being beaten. They were also beaten with sjamboks, sticks, chains, and were beaten under the soles of their feet (falanga). One farm worker tells of being forced to drink water that had been mixed with diesel petrol. Farm workers were singled out and underwent simulated executions, where they were hung from trees or had guns pressed to their forehead. The night before voting opened in the 2002 Presidential elections, the workers were forced to attend one of these all night rallies – pungwes – and were "taught" how they should cast their vote. Of the 139 people interviewed, 65% said that they had a previous experience of OVT. The perpetrators of the OVT in every case was listed as either "war veterans" of Zanu(PF) supporters.

For the past two years, as well facing extreme levels of OVT, individuals on farms also witnessed many incidents of harassement, torture, and even executions. They reported seeing a policeman executed by 'war veterans' in June 2000 on Chipesa Farm and being forced to bury the body on the farm. In some instances, police complicity in the violence was mentioned, in that they did not protect the farm workers and even went as far to have a role to play in the violence. A farm worker tells of watching a soldier beat a man to death around the head with gun until he died. In one case, a man said he saw a school-boy executed by the 'war veterans' for questioning their activities. A farm have seen a record of deteriorating human rights, and the consequent social turmoil has led to an increasing number of

ly displaced people in the country. Violence against the major opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), has b These accusations and verbal abuse pertained in the main to alleged support for the MDC. The workers were told that the farm owners were MDC supporters and by continuing to live and work on the farms, they were also involved.

The farm workers had in total 865 children in the families. Of this number, there were 527 children listed as living on the farms. The survey revealed that 55% of the adults questioned said that incidents of violence had been witnessed by the children. The psychological damage already experienced by this vulnerable group has only been exacerbated by losing their homes, possessions and chance of an education. In many cases they have been also separated from their families.

The actual point at which the farm workers were forced off the farms were characterised by physical assaults, such as the case of the tractor driver who was stoned or the farm worker who was beaten attempting to resist the actions of the 'war veterans' and the Zanu(PF) youths, as well as psychological trauma. The intimidation felt by the workers, as they were given 20 minutes to pack up their lives or face more violence and death, was the end of a cycle lasting for months, and the beginning of one of insecurity as an internally displaced person.

6. MEDICAL ASSESSMENTS:

The medical data reported below is based on self-report, but will be corroborated in due course by medical examination. The medical evidence is in the process of being compiled, and will be included the more detailed report.

6.1 Mental health

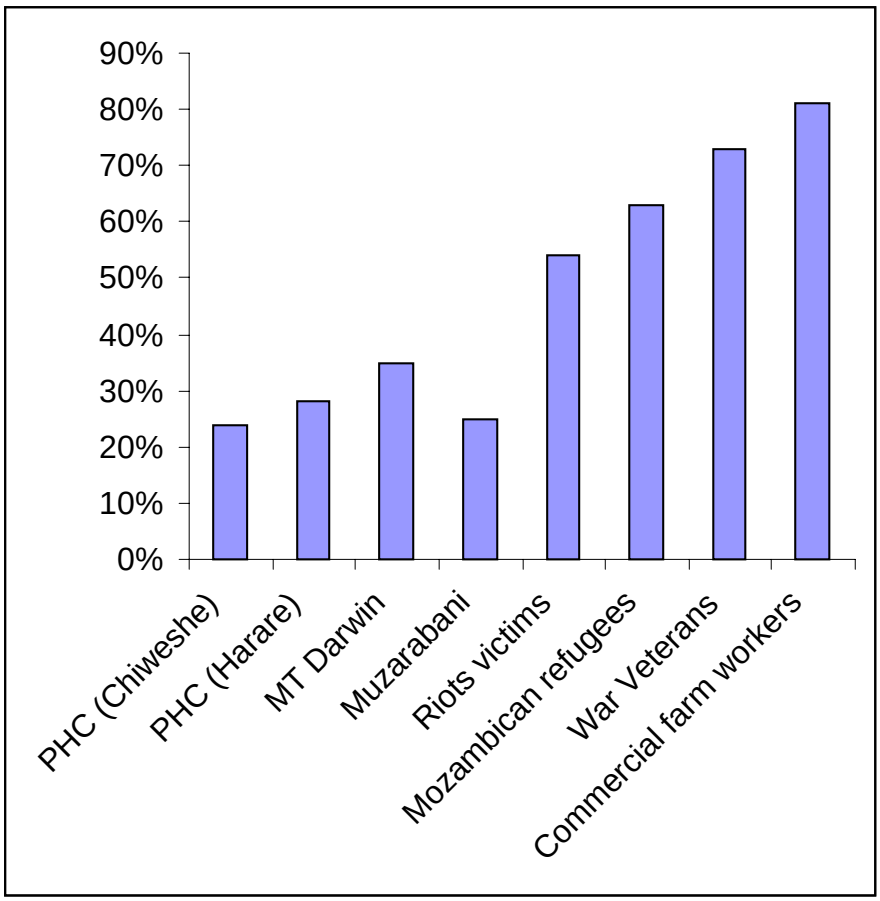
As indicated above, psychological disorder is the most common short-term and long-term effect of torture, whether the torture is physical or merely psychological. 81% reported scores in excess of 4, which is considerably higher than any comparable primary care population[5], including populations containing survivors of torture[6]. It is even in excess of the prevalence

[5] **See** *REELER,A.P., WILLIAMS,H., & TODD,C.,H.,(1993), Psychopathology in Primary Care patients: A four-year study in rural and urban settings, CENTRAL AFRICAN JOURNAL OF MEDICINE, 39, 1-8; Patel V et al. 1997. Common mental disorders in primary care in Harare: associations and risk factors. British Journal of Psychiatry 171: 60-64; Patel V et al. 1998. Outcome of common mental disorders in Harare. British Journal of Psychiatry 172: 53-57.*

[6] **See** *REELER,A.P., MBAPE,P., MATSHONA,J., MHETURA,J., & HLATYWAYO,E. (2001), The prevalence and nature of disorders due to torture in Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe, TORTURE, 11, 4-9.*

obtained in a Zimbabwean refugee setting or the prevalence found in a war veteran group[7]. In fact, it is comparable with multiply traumatised populations, such as those found in Matabeleland, where the population had suffered from organised violence and torture in two successive decades.

Percentage prevalence of psychological disorders in various populations in Zimbabwe. (data taken from various Zimbabwe studies)



As can be seen from the table above, the rates obtained from the IDP group are hugely greater than virtually all previous studies from a wide variety of different populations. The rate reported here is nearly 20% higher than the rate obtained from a displaced persons population – Mozambican refugees – and is nearly 40% higher than the rate obtained from Zimbabwean primary care and community samples. It is higher than the rates found in Mount Darwin and Muzarabani, in which there was specific screening for victims of organised violence and torture, and in which they were previously very high rates of human rights violations reported. The rate is even higher than that found amongst Zimbabwean war veterans, which was previously the highest reported rate from any population here in Zimbabwe.

The implications from these comparisons are very worrying indeed, and require some brief comment. Firstly, this is a group that is still in the displacement process, with no secure home at all for the present – they have at least once been moved forcibly back to the farms from

[7] **See** *REELER,A.P., & IMMERMAN, R.(1994), An initial investigation into psychological disorders in Mozambican refugees: Prevalence and clinical features, CENTRAL AFRICAN JOURNAL OF MEDICINE, 40, 309-315; REELER,A.P. (1995), Trauma in Mozambican refugees: Findings from a training programme for refugee workers, TORTURE, 5, 18-21*. **See also** *REELER,A.P., & MUPINDA,M. (1996), An Investigation into the psychological sequelae of Torture and Organised Violence in Zimbabwean war veterans, LEGAL FORUM, 8, 12-27.*

which they came and where they no longer have any security. Thus, the trauma process is still continuing and feelings of anxiety and depression will be very prominent.

Secondly, they are a group that has had multiple experiences of OVT and has lived in a state of high stress for a considerable time. This is analogous to what trauma experts term living in a zone of "high war stress": a situation in which the likelihood of witnessing death, serious injury, and violence in highly probable. Persons living in such situations are highly likely to develop trauma disorders, as was the case with the Mozambican refugees, war veterans, or ordinary citizens during times of epidemic violence, such as the Liberation War or during the Gukurahundi period in the 1980s.

This finding is bolstered by the findings on the general health problems reported by this sample.

6.2 Present state of physical health

As regards their self-perceived health status, the sample reports very frequencies of symptoms associated with psychological disorder: headaches, dizziness, impaired concentration and memory, chest pains, palpitations, abdominal pains, and sleep disorder are all commonly reported. However, there are also a high number of symptoms that are associated with injury due to physical torture.

Together, the findings indicate a group for which medical and psychological care must be a very high priority.

Condition	Number	%	Condition	Number	%
Headache	77	55%	Vomiting	17	12%
Dizziness	48	35%	Diarrhoea	16	12%
Impaired concentration	47	34%	Constipation	15	11%
Impairment of memory	49	35%	Pain on urination	17	12%
Impairment of hearing	19	14%	Male pain in the genital, female pelvic pain	28	20%
Numbness or pins and needles in arms/legs	47	34%	Lacking control on urination, defecation	7	5%
Reduced strength in arms or legs	32	23%	Convulsions or loss of consciousness in the last month	1	1%
Pains in shoulders or arms	27	19%	Male impotence	7	5%
Pains in legs, including feet	45	32%	Menstrual disturbances	16	12%
Backache	54	39%	Sleeping disturbances	67	48%
Chest pain	45	32%	Difficulty in falling asleep	41	29%
Palpitations	62	45%	Early awakening	22	16%
Abdominal pains	58	42%	Disturbed sleep	22	16%
Nausea	26	19%	Nightmares	26	19%

7. CONCLUSIONS

There are several thousand farms in Zimbabwe that have been listed for acquisition and have "war veterans" and others settled on them currently . If one takes the experiences of the farm workers from the farms surveyed and multiplies the situation to cover all the invaded farms where workers have faced a barrage of intimidation, assault, and eventual forced displacement, the magnitude of the crisis is apparent. With Zimbabwe facing a severe food shortage as a result of a drought and dramatically lowered food production on the commercial farms, the problem of internally displaced persons becomes even more critical. These refugees, and the many more that the coming months will see, all require food, shelter and medical assistance, that will not be forthcoming from a government which is broke and facing international censure.

The overall picture is one that must raise the deepest concerns for all humanitarian agencies and the government. The incidence of reported OVT, and especially torture, is extremely high, but perhaps expected from the plethora of reports of high rates of gross human rights violations taking place on the commercial farms. Although it is difficult to generalise from a clinical study such as this, it does seem fair to postulate a model that will be able to generate an estimate of the likely frequency of both OVT torture and its effects. Here it should be pointed out that there already exists a considerable body of epidemiological research on common mental disorders and disorders due to torture, from which it is possible to make educated guesses. We can certainly make comparisons with other Zimbabwean reports on the prevalence and nature of disorders due to OVT.

A likely model would postulate that the incidence of torture can be inferred from the reports of violence on commercial farms. The more reports that emanate from any particular farm will make it more likely that torture has taken place. Chipesa Farm would thus be a good case from which to postulate a continuum of probability of torture and its effects, having had multiple incidents of gross human rights violations since February 2000. Thus, the greater the number of incidents, the greater the likelihood that torture did occur.

Simple indicators here could be:

- Number of reports of violence overall ;
- Number of reports of “pungwes”;
- Number of reports injuries related to OVT;
- Number of occasions reports to police made.

Assuming that an overall indicator can be generated, and it does not seem very difficult to do this, then it becomes possible to estimate the likely number of people affected. This can be calculated from the actual numbers of farm workers and their families employed on those farms. Using the data derived from the present study, a very crude estimate would then be derived in the following way from the above findings:

- Take all high risk farms, those with multiple reports of gross human rights violations;
- Calculate the rates of gross human rights violations at 71% of all adults;
- Calculate the rates of gross human rights violations at 55% of all children;
- Calculate the rate of psychological disorder at 81% of all adults.

If we assume, as many commentators have suggested, a population of 1 million commercial farm workers and their families, then the figures for trauma are frightening in their implications. Now this may seem to lead to impossibly high rates, but, in the absence of proper epidemiological investigations, it will be vital to have some estimate of need, and it is clearly better in the current humanitarian crisis to err on the side of generosity than design helping systems that miss problems. This is frequently the case with refugee or IDP populations: that disorders due to trauma are not identified as being crucial to the setting up initial help systems.

However, whatever rates of gross human rights violations finally obtain, and whatever rates of disorder are finally established, this preliminary report suggests extreme cause for concern. It will be critical in the discussions on humanitarian assistance that the preoccupation with food is replaced by a more holistic approach in which the multiple problems of IDPs are managed, and not forgetting that similar problems are likely to be found in the residents of the communal Lands.