

Situated in southern Africa, the Republic of Zimbabwe borders the nations of Zambia, Botswana, Mozambique and South Africa. With around one fifth of its adult population living with HIV and an estimated 565 adults and children becoming infected every day (roughly one person every three minutes), Zimbabwe is experiencing one of the harshest AIDS epidemics in the world. This chapter explores how Operation Murambatsvina, which displaced some 700,000 people, including 79 500 adults living with HIV, impacted negatively on people living with or affected by HIV or AIDS and further entrenched their vulnerabilities. It explains how the administration of antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) to delay the onset of AIDS was disrupted due to demolition of the treatment centres and clinics. It highlights how Murambatsvina and the economically harmful policies associated with informal traders have disrupted lives and increased the risk of HIV infection for thousands, while further endangering those already infected. The chapter applauds the significant role performed by different church organizations in assisting the survivors of the operation. However, it poses a further challenge to the church and the local and international community at large not to be content with offering relief services only, but to address the root causes of such crises, in particular the structural problems that give birth to such humanitarian crises. Due to their dominance in the informal sector, women were particularly affected. This chapter documents the voices of women who were affected by the operation and calls for gender justice in Zimbabwe.