

**Translation of an e-mail message dated 20 June 2007, 19:43
From a Hospital in Zimbabwe**

Dear All,

Apart from the fact that for the last 20 hours we have again been completely without electricity, water, land lines and mobile phone, this morning I have learned the tragic news that the transport cost from Harare to Luisa Guidotti Hospital has increased FROM YESTERDAY TO TODAY from 245,000 to 650,000 local dollars.

This illustrates the total collapse of the economic and social structure. Such an increase means that the fuel cost on the black market (where it can still be found) has at least doubled from last week, and the additional costs to reach the above figure are those regarding spare parts.

650,000 local dollars represent exactly DOUBLE THE SALARY of the people you know, such as Kaseke the carpenter and Dixon the plumber. It has been a while now that many of Harare's professional categories, such as nurses, refuse to travel to work from the outskirts of the city where they live to the Central hospitals, as their monthly travelling cost is much higher than their salary. Due to this reason the Central hospitals have collapsed and are almost closed with the exception of the outpatients and casualty departments.

Such inflation is caused by the lack of the production of essential goods, including harvesting by farmers and by the Governor of the National Bank's crazy idea of non-stop printing cheques to bearer whose value is halved every week (it has been many years since we have had banknotes), the purpose of this is to cover the evermore crazy government expenditure.

The repercussions of not having any electricity, means that the factories are not able to produce and that the few white farmers left who are still able to produce something (black farmers are mainly political farmers, un-experienced, unproductive and parasitic) are unable to irrigate the wheat and soy non-stop which are now withering in the fields.

This Country's tragedy appears to have reached a turning point where the people only have two options: sit and die or..... face a violent repression. Other non-violent and legal alternatives have been denied to us since the year 2000.

We are very worried about our AIDS sufferers living just outside the District, as it will be almost impossible for them to come to collect the antiretroviral medication. In order to facilitate their continuity to the treatment, we have been supplying the medication to cover at least a three month period. At this point we will have to give them at least a six month supply, thus jeopardizing their monitoring.

Every week we supplement the Patients and the Staff with additional primary food, and this is a great help, but in front of an economical situation similar to the Weimar Republic "our finger can not plug the hole in the collapsing dam".

We can only pray, work and hope for a positive (and rapid!) change of this catastrophic situation.

I am grateful for the attention and most of all I am grateful for your continued and generous help!

I do not know when I will be able to send you this posting, as we are isolated.

Hugs to all,