

Heal Zimbabwe

14 May 2020

lockdown update

Introduction

On the 19th of April, Zimbabwe extended its lockdown with 14 days as a way of escalating measures of reducing the spread of COVID-19. The country's extension illustrates the government's commitment towards effectively containing the virus in the country. The current partial lockdown relaxed restrictions on mining companies, agricultural and food producers, among others as a way of ensuring constant supply of revenue to the government and food. The government also rolled out social assistance programs for vulnerable households including the elderly, vendors and People with Disabilities as a way of reinforcing the lockdown extension. The government's Task Force on COVID-19 also intensified its outreach activities to establish district and provincial isolation centres for cases of COVID-19 across the country.

Issues covered in this Update

In this report, Heal Zimbabwe's Early Warning and Early Response Situation Room provides an update on: how communities are responding to the extended lockdown, availability and cost of face masks, the conduct of lockdown enforcement officers, the availability and quality of health care services for COVID-19 and other diseases, and the availability of information on COVID-19 in local communities.

Methodology

A total of 4 000 trained Early Warning and Early Response Committee members and at least 5 000 community members who participate in HZT's outreach activities, CBOs operating in areas where Heal Zimbabwe operates and Heal Zimbabwe's Peace Clubs provides and verify information in this update.

Presentation of Updates

Manicaland Province

Mutasa

Community members in Ward 21 Penhalonga were moving around without masks or anything covering their faces. Most businesses were operating as usual. There were no police officers enforcing the lockdown in Penhalonga. In Ward 31 Hauna Growth Point, people were moving around wearing homemade masks. Police officers were turning away everyone who was caught without a mask.

Buhera

Community members in Ward 5, 6 and Ward 10 stayed in their homes. There were no police officers enforcing the lockdown in Ward 5 and 6. A 2 litre bottle of cooking oil is now costing ZW\$180.00 while salt is pegged at ZW\$90.00 in Ward 5 and 6. These wards have not yet received any assistance from the government to help cushion them from the effects of the lockdown.

Chipinge

Community members in Ward 1, Ward 3, Ward 16 and Ward 26 were moving around covering themselves with homemade masks and head wraps. In Ward 1, police officers were turning away those who didn't have masks. These wards have not received any COVID-19 related assistance from the government since the start of the lockdown. Community members highlighted that there is need to take care of the elderly and orphans as they are now failing to provide for themselves due to the lockdown. On the 13th of May, Chipinge Rural District Council Chief Executive Officer and the District Development Coordinator held a meeting with about 40 stakeholders at Checheche Growth Point-Ward 24 to map a way forward after the demolition of Green Market. The two managed to persuade vendors to destroy their structures to prepare for a new vending site where there will be better health services including public toilets. In Ward 26 in Machona village there was food distribution by the Department of Social Welfare with social distance being observed.

Nyanga

Shops were open at Avila Business centre and community members were wearing masks. Cases of malaria are now on the decrease in this area. Community members did not receive any assistance from the government to help cushion them from the effects of the lockdown.

Chimanimani

Community members in Ward 15 stayed in their home whilst those from Ward 8, Ward 5 and Ward 3 were moving around with home-made masks and head wraps. Police officers were seen at around 08:00hours turning away those who did not have masks and closing down beer halls which were selling alcohol in Ward 15, Ward 20 and Ward 8. These wards have not received any assistance from the government to help them against the effects of COVID-19. Community members were complaining that cases of theft have increased in Ward 15 during the lockdown.

Makoni

Community members in Ward 12 were loitering moving without masks and business was operating as usual. There were no police officers to help enforce the lockdown. Shops in Ward 12 were open. However, community members were complaining over shortage of basic commodities in local shops. Basic commodities are only available at the parallel market, where dealers sell in US dollars only. A 10Kg of mealie meal is pegged at US\$5.00, cooking oil US\$5.00 and salt US\$2.50. Community members highlighted that they have not yet received any COVID-19 related assistance from the government since the beginning of the lockdown.

Mashonaland West Province

Hurungwe

In ward 15, people are no longer staying in their homes. There were no police officers to enforce the lockdown. Shops at Chiedza Business centre were open, although basic commodities such as

sugar and mealie meal were scarce. Cooking oil is being sold at US\$4.00. Community members have not received any form of assistance from the government to help cushion them from the effects of the lockdown. Community members also lamented that LEAD and the Social Welfare Department have also stopped food aid distribution.

Magunje

People are not staying in their homes in Ward 10. Most people have gone back to their business and they are not observing any of the lockdown measures. Community members are moving around without wearing any masks. Some of the shops at Magunje Growth Point were also relaxing the need to ensure that their customers observe social distancing.

Chinhoyi

There is an increase in the movement of people around shopping centres. Police and soldiers are moving around in their trucks enforcing the lockdown especially in public places. A group of people were arrested at Hunyani Business Centre in ward 4 as they were moving around without wearing face masks. Community members were highlighted that they have not received any subsidized mealie-meal for the past two weeks.

Mashonaland Central Province

Mt Darwin

Community members in Ward 14 are staying in their homes. However, at a funeral in the area, mourners were more than 50, shaking hands and not observing social distancing at all.

Masvingo Province

Masvingo

Masvingo Province now holds 275 returnees from South Africa who are quarantined at Masvingo Teachers' College in Masvingo and Rupangwana Training Centre in Chiredzi. Community members were concerned that some of the returnees were convicts released from South African prisons as the South African government decongested their prisons. The Department of Social Welfare is taking care of the returnees whilst the police ensures that returnees do not end up breaching the quarantine rules. Masvingo Polytechnic College, Bikita Training Centre and Alvord Training Centre were also earmarked for holding other returnees, in the event that the number of returnees increases.

Matabeleland Province

Lupane

It was business as usual at Lupane centre with most shops opening for business. However, community members wore their masks in public places. There was also a noticeable increase in the number of police officers enforcing the lockdown at the centre. Lupane Local board staff members continued disinfecting public spaces. Basic commodities remain scarce and only available on the black market at exorbitant foreign currency prizes. Community members highlighted that they were no longer practicing social distancing and regular hand sanitizing in ZUPCO buses. At St Paul's, the number of community members at the local shops increased in the afternoon, with most of them drinking beer in groups and without masks. At Fatima, Lupanda, Makovula and Matshiya, most community members stayed in their homes. Local shops in these areas were open although they reported low customer turnout.

