

Heal Zimbabwe

Day 16

lockdown update

Introduction

Heal Zimbabwe's Early Warning and Early Response Situation Room is monitoring how communities are responding to the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic and the national lockdown which was announced by the President on the 27th of March, 2020.

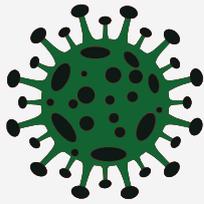
The report monitors the level of community information and knowledge about the virus, communities compliance with the curtailment of human interaction (observance of social distancing, reduction in community citizen gatherings,) and service providers provision of sanitisers and hand washing, law enforcement officers' compliance and respect for the rights of citizens, the extent and physical visibility of law enforcement officers.

Methodology

The information here is gathered by the Heal Zimbabwe's 2,500 community trained Human Rights Monitors (HRMs) in the country's ten provinces. The information is verified by our community peace clubs and community based organisations in the areas where we work.

National events of significance

To date, the pandemic has claimed 3 people with 17 confirmed cases. The High Court of Zimbabwe today, the 14th of April 2020, made a landmark ruling where it granted an interim order that highlight that the police, army and other law enforcement agents must respect human rights, dignity and fundamental freedoms during the lockdown. The order comes in the wake of gross human rights violations by members of the security services against citizens. Heal Zimbabwe hails the ruling and reiterate that while citizens must comply with the lockdown, the use of brute force, degrading treatment and violence by members of the security services against citizens remains a gross violation of Section 208 (d) of the constitution that states that security services must not violate the fundamental rights or freedoms of any person.



COVID-19

Harare

This report focuses on Harare. The focus on Harare, the capital city, is informed by the increasing number of reported cases, the risk in Harare and the threat it provides to other parts of the country. There is a clear distinction between high density suburbs and the affluent middle and low density suburbs.

Generally in the low and medium density suburbs there were few recorded cases of public gatherings, the open shops provided sanitisers, and emphasised social distance in their queues. There is limited public human interaction as streets are largely deserted. Contrarily, in the high density suburbs life continues as normal as it was before the lockdown, with an increase police and law enforcement agents presence and a number of reported human rights violations.

Public gatherings continue in the majority of areas under monitoring. The areas have higher risks of local transmission at shared community water sources, in the queues for basic commodities, at vegetable vending markets, limited observation of social distancing in the shops. Below are some of the observations recorded today, the 14th of April 2020:

Glen Norah

At around 0900 hours, a group of soldiers heavily assaulted people who were moving around C extension. By 1600 hours, community members in the area had already resumed moving around as if there. Very little observation of social distance, some of the opened shops provided sanitisers, possibility of local transmission high especially at local water points Dzivarasekwa

High human interaction members are still moving around the area, searching for water and cheaper mealie-meal with limited chances. Local boreholes usually have more than 30 people and people observe social distancing. However, these boreholes are never sanitized and expose every user to the risk of getting the virus

Budiriro 5

High human interaction, limited chances for social distancing in public places, high risk of local transmission At around 1800 hours, community members in Budiriro 5 were moving around as if everything was normal. Cars selling vegetables and meat were also moving around the area.

Mbare

High human interaction, no social distancing in the crowded and densely populated places. It was still business as usual for community members in Mbare, with some playing social soccer.. By 1600 hours, young people from Matapi and Rugare were moving around in groups. This is despite the fact that police usually disperses people off the streets on a daily basis in the area. High risk of viral spread. There is need for civic education and provision of social safety nets for those affected

Rugare

High human interaction, no social distancing observed in the public places, high visibility of citizens on the streets. High chances of viral spread. Community members are not complying with the lockdown measures. Today, Off Sale Bar opened around 08:00hours and by midday the number of people gathered at the bar had increased to around 30 youths.

Domboshava(peri-urban)

There is limited public spaces human interaction, very evident social distancing in the few areas. Community members in Domboshava, Munyawire Ward 1 stayed at home. All Supermarkets were open from 09:00hours. All bars were closed.

Community members in Domboshava Mungate Ward 4 stayed at home. Community members in Mverechena Ward 4 stayed at home. Soldiers and police were deployed around 12:00hours at Mverechena business centre to enforce the lockdown.

Budiriro 2

Most shops were today closed but informal traders were selling their products at most shopping centres. The uncontrolled human interaction, with no enforcement of social distance, space occurrence of protective masks, absence of soap and any water for cleaning and public boreholes present a high risk for viral transmission.

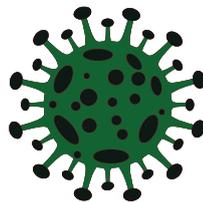
Highfield

The traffic of residents at shopping centres is still at the pre-lockdown levels. It is business as usual in this suburb as informal traders are, exposing themselves and their customers with limited observation of social distance, no use of sanitisers or washing of hands with soap and water, as they display wares along roads that lead to shopping centres.

Glen View 3

Staying indoors for most people who rely on informal trading,

21 Days of Lockdown



staying indoors is proving very difficult. Police Officers and soldiers are mounting road blocks along all roads leading to town and most motorists are being turned away. Those who are caught defying lockdown regulations are made to pay fines ranging from ZW\$100-150

Budiriro 5

Today, police dispersed vendors at Budiriro 5 shops who had displayed their wares. Most vendors who spoke to Heal Zimbabwe resident Human Rights Monitors highlighted that they rely on vending to feed their families hence it was very difficult for them to stay at home since they have no other forms of income.

Ruwa

It is still business as usual for community members in Ruwa, especially around Spar. Everyday people flock industrial area searching for cheaper mealie-meal at Gain Cash and Carry, and groceries. There are always queues of people booking day old chicks in the area.

Damofalls

Most people are staying in their homes except for vendors who are displaying wares along road

Chitungwiza

Informal traders are defying the lockdown measures by continuing with their day to day activities. Yesterday, their wares were seized by the police. Two vendors were arrested.

Chitungwiza Unit B

The 21 day lockdown has seen vendors risking arrests and assaults from law enforcement agents as they continue to display their wares along the roads. Yesterday, police arrested scores of vendors and also confiscated their wares.

St Marys

It is still business as usual for people around Chigovanyika business centre. Most of the times, vendors will be displaying their wares along streets. Community members around Zengeza 5 shopping centre were in their homes. However, community members usually congest at community boreholes, where they do not observe social distancing

Economic survival during covid-19

Economic survival during covid-19

Heal Zimbabwe noted that in high density suburbs in Harare, informal traders' livelihoods have been directly and negatively impacted by both the threat of COVID-19 and the lockdown. Vendors who spoke to Heal Zimbabwe in suburbs such as Chitungwiza, Highfield and Budiro highlighted that their lack of alternative source of livelihood. While government, through the Ministry of Finance, announced a ZW\$600 million package to cater for vulnerable groups, there are reports that the identification of beneficiaries is being done in a partisan way.

Cash transfers for identified households have been reported in the media to commence from tomorrow (15/04/2020). While commending government for the provision of the social safety net, albeit inadequate, Heal Zimbabwe notes that such a facility is rendered ineffective by the absence of broad consultations and transparent mechanisms. Closely linked to this, is the shortage of mealie meal during this lockdown. In most suburbs citizens are forced to disregard social distancing as they stampede to purchase government subsidized mealie meal.

In the wake of the lockdown, unscrupulous businesses have taken advantage of the lockdown and have hiked prices of most basic necessities including mealie meal thereby placing it beyond the reach of many. The dilapidated state of our health infrastructure is another cause for concern. As citizens observe lockdown regulations, thoughts of anxiety continue to linger as a covid-19 diagnosis for an ordinary citizen can signal the end of life. Government has done little to assure citizens on the preparedness of our health facilities to contain covid-19.

The Ministry of Health daily updates do not inspire confidence and continue to erode citizens' trust in the government. Citizens on micro blogging sites such as twitter have registered misgivings on the number of people being tested for Covid -19. They argue that these numbers are very insignificant against our population of more than 13 million people.

In light of this, Heal Zimbabwe implores government to adhere to United Nations COVID-19 Human rights compliance which calls for observation of right to participation and access to information, right to health, right to food, leave no one behind, ensure people with disability have access to reliable information in accessible formats.

1. Ensure the frontline health workers are adequately remunerated and provided with PPE
2. Ensure that members of the security services are properly and safely protected from either contracting the virus and or spreading it as they carry out their duties, and their members who perpetrate human rights violations during the lockdown are brought before the courts
3. To implement transparent depoliticised social safety nets mechanisms to ensure equitable and fair access by vulnerable groups.
4. To prioritise screening and testing. A lockdown without the requisite testing will not achieve the desired outcome.

Citizens should comply with health and hygiene guidelines to curtail the spread of the virus.