

Heal Zimbabwe

19-20 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

Masvingo Province

Masvingo

Masvingo Province recorded its first COVID-19 case on the 20th of May 2020. The person was placed at Rujeko clinic which is the only isolation centre in Masvingo urban. On the 20th of May, a large number of people were queuing for sugar at Pick n Pay supermarket in the CBD. Each person was being allowed to buy one 2kg of sugar at ZW\$67.00. Most residents are failing to access basic commodities in their residential areas due to price hikes. A 2kg of sugar is being sold at ZW\$100.00 cash or ZW\$120.00 Ecocash. Many business operators now prefer US dollars

and South African Rands to Zimbabwean dollars. This has left many citizens failing to access basic commodities.

Masvingo city council resolved to peg prices for residential and commercial stands in foreign currency in a move allegedly meant to retain the value of land in Masvingo. The new pricing structure is going to be difficult for homes seekers. The Finance and General Purpose Committee in submitting its report during a recent Full Council meeting said there was a need for the local authority to have a fixed price on land which is pegged in US dollars. The committee proceeded to peg the lowest-priced stand at US\$3.50 per square metre to US\$19.00 a square metre for commercial stands in the central business district. Officials stated that fixing the same in a local currency will result in the Council failing to return capital money which it injected towards installation of roads, water and sewer reticulation. Residents earn their wages in a local currency, hence it is going to be very difficult for them to afford the stands in US dollars even though they are pegged at interbank rates.

Zaka

Community members from Ward 13, Ward 19, Ward 24 and Ward 18 are now moving around and most of the community members are stating that if they continue to stay in their homes they will starve and the only way to save themselves is to move around, finding ways to feed their families. Police officers continue to enforce the lockdown and today they were very strict on masks, In Jerera, police officers were looking for shop licenses and medical reports without council or medical personnel. These officers were charging a fine of ZWL\$500.00 when one was found without any of the items.

Bikita

People from Ward 20, Ward 32, Ward 12, Ward 10 and Nyika Growth Point are now moving around and there is a huge difference from when the lockdown started. Community members seem to be more afraid of police officers than COVID-19 itself. Whenever police officers approach they run away and continue their businesses soon after the departure of police officers. Some community members however continue to stay in their homes. Community members also continue to wear their home-made masks when in public places.

Gutu

Community members from Ward 5, Ward 6, Ward 7, Ward 31 and Ward 41 have also intensified their movements. Most community members are no longer staying in their homes as expected. Police officers are mainly enforcing the lockdown at Mupandawana Growth Point, leaving shopping centres in the rural areas unattended. Community members are putting on their home-made masks to protect themselves from COVID-19.

Mwenezi

On the 19th of May, it was business as usual for community members at Neshuro Growth Point. Local enforcement officers were only ensuring that shops close and open at the stipulated times. Community members are no longer practicing social distancing especially in local taxis. Less people continue to wear their masks in public places.

Manicaland Province

Mutasa

Community members in Ward 21 were roaming around without masks. There were no police officers

to enforce the lockdown today, the 20th of May. All shops in Ward 21 were open and had most of the basic commodities. Community members expressed concern over the extension of the lockdown. Community members in Ward 31 Hauna Growth Point are still staying in their homes. Police officers were turning away those who did not have masks from Hauna business centre.

Buhera

Community members in Ward 5 and Ward 6 stayed in their homes. A group of police officers were, at around 0900 hours, turning away those who did not have masks from Buhera Office and Jagers Shopping Centres. Most shops were open at these shopping centres and had most of the basic commodities in their stocks.

Nyanga

By the 19th of May, people from Ward 4 were still staying in their homes. Shops were opening from morning till 1600 at Ruwangwe business centre. Prices of basic commodities such as sugar and cooking oil have been hiked to ZW\$160.00 and ZW\$180.00 respectively. Police officers were enforcing the lockdown at Ruwangwe Growth Point, arresting people moving around without wearing face masks.

Chipinge

Community members in Ward 3 and Ward 1 are staying in their homes. A group of police officers were, at around 0900 hours, turning away those who did not have masks from Mutema and Maunganidze business centres. Shops in Ward 3 were open and with most of the basic commodities in their stocks.

Chimanimani

Community members in Ward 8 were roaming around without masks. In Ward 5 and Ward 20, most community members stayed in their homes. Police officers were turning away those who did not have masks from local shopping centres.

Makoni

Community members in Ward 32 are staying in their homes. Community members in Ward 15 were roaming around without masks. Police officers were, at around 0900 hours, turning away everyone who had no masks from local shopping centres. Most shops in Ward 32 were open and had most of the basic commodities.

Harare Metropolitan Provinces

Domboshava

Community members in Ward 4 are staying in their homes. A group of police officers were, at around 0900 hours turning away those who did not have masks. Most of the shops in Ward 4 were open and had most of the basic commodities in their stocks being charged in US dollars. Community members from this ward continue express concern over government decision to extent the lockdown with an indefinite period.

Highfields

It is business as usual for community members in Highfields Ward 24. A group of police officers were seen around 10:00hours turning away those who didn't have masks. Supermarkets in Ward 24 were open and all basic commodities were available .A 10kg mealie meal was costing ZW\$200, cooking oil ZW\$150, salt \$1USD and no masks were available. Community members expressed concern over the extension of the

lockdown as the government is yet to provide aid.

Chitungwiza

People from around Makoni suburbs are no longer staying in their homes. There is too much activity at Makoni business centre as people are back to their day to day vending operations. Police were enforcing the lockdown at Makoni Business Centre by arresting people who were moving around without wearing face masks. Makoni area has not received any subsidized mealie for the past one week.