

Heal Zimbabwe

26 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.

I 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

Matabeleland North Province

Lupane

It was business as usual at Lupane Centre with people continuing with their small income generating activities. Community members highlighted that they were now running out of food and savings. Local public transport remains a challenge to most community members and the ZUPCO bus is overwhelmed with the number of people who are requiring its services. Basic commodities remain unavailable in the two major supermarkets at Lupane Centre and prices continue to skyrocket.

Masvingo Province

Bikita

Community members from Ward 10, Ward 12, Ward 32, and Ward 20 are still staying at home although there is an increase in movement of people. The Department of Social Welfare reduced the number of its beneficiaries in almost all the wards. Prices of basic goods continue to rise such that cooking oil is now pegged at ZW\$180.00, sugar at ZW\$160.00. Local shops do not have mealie-meal in their stocks and community members buy a bucket of maize for ZW\$180.00 from local maize producers. Small taxis continue patrolling and most operators are now bribing police officers.

Gutu

Community members from Ward 5, Ward 6, Ward 7 and Ward 31 are staying at home. However, community members highlighted that there are a few other members who have not stopped engaging in traditional beer drinking gatherings. Prices for basic commodities continue to increase and sugar is now being sold at ZW\$180.00, cooking oil price hovers around ZW\$350.00 for a 2 litres.

Mwenezi

Community members at Neshuro Growth Point are not staying at home. Most people are seen moving around at shops and in the villages people move around without masks. Local transport continues to operate. People no longer wear masks and they rarely observe social distancing. Prices for basic goods have also increased despite the fact that most shops at the Growth Point now have a shortage of basic goods. Sugar is now being sold at ZAR100.00 and cooking oil at ZAR120.00.

Zaka

Community members are no longer observing the lock down rules and police officers manning Jerera and Chinorumba business centres are now less restrictive. Some community members are now moving without masks at the shops. Community members highlighted that prices of goods continue to increase. A 2kg of sugar is now being sold at ZW\$160.00, whilst a 2l of cooking oil is now being sold at ZW\$180.00.

Chiredzi

People continue to move around high density suburbs especially in Tshovani. The number of people moving in the CBD has increased. Local commuter omnibuses continue to ferry people at their full capacities and local police officers manning road blocks are not even penalizing them. Sugar is now being sold at US\$2.00. Community members noted that the price increase led to an improved availability of sugar in local shops. Community members have not seen any subsidized mealie meal for over two weeks now. Local shops are now charging US\$4.00 for a 10kg of mealie meal.

Masvingo

Local commuter omnibus operators and small taxis, popularly known as mushikashika, are back on the road in most areas across the town, defying the government's ban on their operations during the lockdown. ZUPCO is failing to cope with the increased number of commuters and is not servicing between cities and rural routes. This has forced long distance travellers to resort boarding Haulage trucks in their numbers, exposing themselves to infection.

Mashonaland West Province

Hurungwe

Community members in ward 24 are staying at home although there are a few people who are still not observing the lock down by engaging in traditional beer drinking gatherings. Prices of basic commodities continue to rise and sugar is now being sold at ZW\$180.00, and a 2l of cooking oil is now beyond ZW\$350.00.

Chinhoyi

Community members in Hunyani and Chikonohono suburbs continue to move around doing different businesses. Police officers have been enforcing the lockdown and arresting those moving around without wearing masks in Chinhoyi. Price of basic commodities continues to rise on a daily basis. Local tuck shops are now selling a 2kg of sugar at US\$2.80. Community members highlighted that they last bought subsidized mealie meal close to a month ago. This has forced them to buy mealie meal from black market where it is being sold at US\$5.00.

Harare Metropolitan Province

Chitungwiza

Community members in Chitungwiza are not staying at home. Most people are seen moving around at shops and in Seke village. Local transport operators have resumed their work and there is no police to monitor the environment. Prices have also increased and basic goods are now scarce. Sugar is now being sold at ZAR100.00 and cooking oil and ZAR120.00.

Manicaland Province

Nyanga North

Community members in ward 18 are staying at home. Shops are opening from morning until 3 pm. Police officers rarely come to enforce the lockdown and some community members are now moving without masks. Community members expressed concern over the ever rising price of basic commodities. A 2kg of sugar is now being sold at ZW\$160.00 and a 2l of cooking oil is now at ZW\$180.00.