

Heal Zimbabwe

lockdown update (30 April – 2020)

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 basic commodities such as mealie-meal and cooking oil, people's access to savings, 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 provide and verify information in this update.

Presentation of Updates

Matabeleland North Province

Lupane

Most shops were open and had subsidized mealie meal since yesterday. This has resulted in community members stocking up as much mealie-meal as possible for their families. Local police officers were peacefully ensuring that people observe social distancing. No cases of arrests were reported today. Vegetable markets and restaurants remain closed. It was business as usual at St Lukes shops and business Centre with people going about their business. Most

people are long distance travellers coming from around Lupane mostly using scotch carts to seek medical services at St Luke's hospital. Jotsholo and Menyezwa shopping centers recorded an increase in the number of people purchasing groceries. Police officers were enforcing social distancing and limiting number of people inside shops. At Tshongokwe, it was business as usual for most people as they went about their business.

Masvingo Province

Zaka

In Zaka ward 19 Village health workers had a meeting at Jerera clinic where Village Health Workers were instructed to test for malaria in their respective villages. They were promised PPE to protect them from Covid 19. Currently, there are no test kits for Covid 19. Community members in the district continue to stay in their homes and police officers continuously monitor Jerera and Chinorumba shops in Ward 13 to promote social distancing. Ward 19 community members highlighted their disapproval of the directive from local politicians that government's subsidized mealie-meal must be sold by ZANU PF District Chairpersons.

Bikita

Community members in Bikita continue to stay in their homes and police officers continue to peacefully enforce the lockdown and shops opening hours are being maintained that is from 0900hrs to 1500hrs. Community members are now facing hunger as most of them have run out of food stocks. There has not been enough assistance from the Ministry of Social Welfare to feed the majority of people who are dire need for food.

Mwenezi

Community members at Neshuro Growth Point continue staying in their homes. Police officers are also moving around Neshuro Growth Point to ensure that all shops are opened and closed during the regulated time and that people are moving for essential activities. Neshuro hospital has not recorded any malaria cases that are known to community members and the hospital continue to assist people from outside the gate and taking mainly critical cases inside.

Gutu

Gutu community members from Ward 5,6,31 and 46 continue to stay in their homes and Police officers also continue to peacefully reinforce the lock down. Shops continue to operate according to the stipulated times.

Mashava

Community members from Mashava are staying in their homes. Police officers are peacefully maintaining order and social distancing during opening and closing hours of shops.

Manicaland Province Updates

Mutasa

Today, community members in Mutasa South Ward 21 Penhalonga were going about their business as usual. There were no police officers seen enforcing the lockdown. Tsvingwe clinic in Ward 21 was open, all drugs were available and no cases of malaria were recorded in the area. However, nurses

were complaining over lack of protective clothing to perform their duties. Covid 19 test kits were not available as well as the drugs. Shops in Ward 21 were open with subsidized mealie meal costing ZWL\$85.00 and cooking oil at ZWL\$120. No referral centres for testing Covid 19 have been established yet in the Ward. Community members obtain their information on Covid 19 from radios and televisions. Community members in Mutasa North Ward 31 Hauna Growth Point were loitering around. Supermarkets in Ward 31 were open such as Mutare Farm Supply known as MFS had 30 customers purchasing mealie meal and no social distance was being observed. Community members were complaining over the high prices set for basic commodities such as subsidized mealie meal costing ZWL\$85 and non-subsidized mealie-meal at ZWL\$200. Hauna District hospital was open sanitizing patients at the entrance, all drugs were available. A group of police force were seen around 15:00hours encouraging community members to stay at home.

Buhera

Community members in Buhera West Ward 5 stayed at their homes. Buhera hospital was open for emergency services only, health workers were complaining over shortage of drugs for malaria and flue. Community members also highlighted that on the 29th of April, a malaria patient passed away at Buhera hospital due to lack of drugs for the disease at the hospital. There were no Covid 19 test kits at the hospital. Most shops were closed by police officers who were demanding operating licences. This made it difficult for community members to access basic commodities. Community members highlighted that there were no referral centres for testing Covid 19 established in the area. Community members were also complaining over Ecocash cash withdrawal charges that local agents are charging per withdrawal. Local Ecocash agents were charging 40% for one to withdrawal cash.

Chimanimani

Community members in Chimanimani Ward 8 were going about their business as usual. Nyanyadzi Clinic Ward 8 was open, attending to emergency cases only. Nurses at Gudyanga and Nyanyadzi Clinics continue complaining over shortage of drugs and protective clothing for them to perform their duties. Most shops at Nyanyadzi, Wengezi and Tonhorai shopping centres were open today despite community members complaining over price hikes. There are no COVID-19 test kits at the two clinics. A group of police officers were seen around 08:00hours at Nyanyadzi shopping centre to help reinforce the lockdown encouraging everyone to stay at home. Community members get covid 19 information from their radio and television sets. Local Ecocash agents charge 40% as commission for cash withdrawals.

Makoni

It was business as usual for community members in Makoni Ward West Ward. Rupfende clinic was open and attending to emergency cases only. Nurses were complaining over shortage of drugs and water supply at the clinic. The clinic has no test kits for COVID-19. Shops in Ward 15 were open and none of them had mealie-meal. Community members were complaining over the price of cooking oil which cost ZWL\$200. They further highlighted that they were not aware of any referral centre for providing specialized COVID-19 services. A group of police officers were seen around 09:00hours encouraging everyone to stay in their homes. Community members from this ward get covid 19 information from their radios and mobile phones. The prices are even higher when one was using Ecocash, yet local Ecocash agents are charging 40% as commission for cash withdrawal.

Harare Metropolitan Province

Borrowdale Pomona

It was business as usual for community members in Borrowdale Pomona. Supermarkets at Village Walk were open recording temperature, and ensuring that their customers maintain social distance. All basic commodities were available and there was no subsidized mealie- meal in any of the shops.

Highfield

Community members in Highfield Ward 24 stayed in their homes. Local Poly Clinic in Ward 24 was open and attending to emergency cases only. However nurses were complaining over shortage of drugs. The clinic does not have any test kits for Covid 19. A group of police officers were seen around 12:00hours peacefully encouraging community members not to gather in groups. Community members were complaining with the prices for mealie-meal which ranges between ZWL\$120.00 and ZWL\$200. Community members were not aware of any local covid 19 referral centres that were available in the ward. Residents from Ward 24 highlighted that they rely much on information which they get from their radios, televisions and mobile phones. They also highlighted that they were paying local Ecocash agents 40% for all cash withdrawals.

Chitungwiza Unit G

It was business as usual for a community member from Unit G .Makoni 24hour hospital in Unit G was open and attending to emergency cases only. However, nurses were complaining over lack of protective clothing for them to safely perform their duties. The hospital has no COVID-19 test kits. Community members spent the whole day queuing for subsidized mealie-meal at Pick n Pay Makoni. Police officers were seen encouraging community members to maintain social distancing.

Mashonaland West Province

Hurungwe

Community members in Ward 15 and 24 are staying in their homes. Village heads are enforcing the lockdown and ensuring that community members practise safe hygiene. Madudzo shops were open from morning to 3pm .There was food-aid distribution on the 25th of April by Lead Trust at Deve Business Centre. Community members practiced social distancing during the distribution.

Chinhoyi

Community members are staying in their homes although there is too much movement in Chikonohono especially between 8am and 1pm. A group of police officers were peacefully enforcing the lockdown at Hunyani Business Centre. In Gadzema location, there is a market place that is opening at 2am everyday allowing customers to order vegetables before police officers start work at 8 am. Chikonohono clinic is opening everyday and assisting patients with medication. Suspected cases of COVID-19 are referred to Chinhoyi Provincial Hospital which has COVID -19 test kits and was designated as the Provincial Referral Centre. Council yesterday demolished illegal structures at Ruvimbo Business centre Ward 13.

Mashonaland Central Province

Mvurwi

Community members from Ward 28 are now defying lockdown measures of staying in their homes. Reasons cited include the fact that most people rely on informal trade for their livelihoods. Every week, the ward receives 10 tonnes of subsidized mealie-meal and this is sold at ZWL470.00 at National Foods. Local shops and vendors are opening from 8am to 1200 hours. Council is demolishing all vendors' structures that are being found at undesignated areas. Local residents are paying 40% for all cash withdrawals from Ecocash agents.

Muzarabani

Community members in ward 2, and ward 17 Hoya are still staying in their homes. However, local shops

are now running out of stock for most basic commodities. Prices of the few remain essentials have been hiked. The prices are increased with 45% if one is paying with Ecocash. Community members expressed that they were also being charged 45% by local Ecocash Agents for all withdrawals. Redcross is distributing maize to local community members in Ward 17. Yesterday, it distributed the same aid in Ward 18, Mutemakungu and Ward 2, Chadereka area. Community members were observing social distancing during the distribution process. These wards have been experiencing an increase in malaria cases. Local Village Health Workers have been testing and referring people with malaria to local clinics.

