

Heal Zimbabwe

lockdown update (6 May 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 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

Mashonaland West Province

Magunje

Most people are not staying in their homes. The terms of the lockdown extension were not clear to most people in Magunje. Police officers were monitoring and enforcing the lockdown at Magunje Business Centre ward 10 and 11. They were arresting everyone who was moving in public places without wearing face masks. Magunje Business Centre shops were open from morning till 3 pm. However, all of the shops were accepting customers who were wearing face masks only. A local tailor at Magunje is the only one currently selling face masks in the area and

he is charging between ZWL\$30.00 to ZWL \$40 depending on size and quality of the material.

Chinhoyi

There is an increase in the movement of people in Chinhoyi town, Chikonohono and Hunyani suburbs. Police are also ensuring that everyone wears a mask in public places, and that everyone without a mask is denied access into banks, shops or ZUPCO buses. At around 1100 hours, groups of police officers were spotted in ward 2,4 and 5 arresting people without masks and taking them to police stations to pay fines.

Manicaland Province

Nyanga

Community members from Ward 18 are staying in their homes. There were no police officers or soldiers enforcing the lockdown. Most shops in the ward were open. However, none of them were selling face masks. This has resulted in many travelling to Nyanga town using animal driven carts or resort to homemade masks. Business operators in the ward are still providing hand sanitizers at the entrance of their shops and encouraging customers to exercise social distancing.

Mutasa

It was business as usual for community members in Ward 21 and Ward 31 .Several people were not wearing face masks. Community members in Ward 31 highlighted that they cannot afford home-made face masks which were being charged at US\$2.00 each. In Ward 21, there are no masks at all in the shops and as a result community members have resorted to head wraps and t-shirts. There were no police officers to help enforce the lockdown in Ward 21. Community members from Ward 21 were advised that they can only buy masks in Mutare and yet there is no public transport linking the Ward and Mutare. A group of police officer turned away people who wanted to access Hauna Growth Point without face masks.

Buhera

Community members in Ward 5 were roaming around without face masks. Although police officers were present at Buhera office business centre, they were not emphasising the need to put on a mask. All shops in the Ward were open. However these had no masks in their stocks.

Chipinge

Community members in Ward 16 and Ward 21 were roaming around and were not wearing any masks. This was also observed in Ward 1. A group of police officers in Ward 16 turned away those without masks from Kondo business centre and encouraged them to at least cover themselves with a cloth if they were failing to have proper masks. Although most of the shops in Ward 16 and Ward 21 were open, none of them was selling masks. Homemade face masks were being sold at US\$3.00 in Ward 21 and community members highlighted they did not afford them.

Chimanimani

Community members in Chimanimani Ward 8 stayed in their homes. A group of police officers were seen turning away those who had no masks from Nyanyadzi Shopping Centre. None of the shops in Ward 8 were selling masks. This resulted in most community members' covering themselves with head wraps. Most of the people who were seen with masks had homemade masks. Local tailors were

charging US\$1.00 per home-made mask.

Makoni

Community members in Makoni Ward 32 and Ward 15 stayed in their homes. Most shops in Ward 32 were open although they had a shortage of basic commodities especially cooking oil, mealie-meal and sugar. Local police officers were turning away those who did not have masks, in the two wards. Shops in Ward 15 were open and they had no masks. Community members highlighted that the government must provide masks for its citizens instead of arresting them.

Harare Metropolitan Province

Chitungwiza

Community members in Chitungwiza Zengeza 4 stayed in their homes. At around 1000 hours, a group of police officers were seen encouraging everyone to wear masks and observe social distance at Zengeza shopping centre. Residents were also complaining over the price of masks which range from US\$1.00 to US\$3.00 each. At Makoni, there has been an increase in the number of people moving around the streets.

Matebeleland Province

Lupane

Only a few people were spotted at Lupane centre on the 5th of May. There was heavy police presence at the centre and this could have resulted in the decrease of the number of people who visited the centre. The police officers were strict on all informal trading in and around Lupane, demanded compulsory wearing of face masks and one meter social distancing. However, most citizens in Lupane have resorted to home-made masks as a measure of cutting down their cost. ZUPCO is the only available means of public transport. However, as people are not being sanitized as they board the bus, and no social distance is observed. At Tshongokwe, Gomoza and Jotsholo centres there were fewer community members moving around the shops. No shops were selling masks. At St Pauls business centre, it was business as usual.

Masvingo Province

Masvingo

Nurses at Masvingo general hospital are threatening to on industrial action. Admitted patients are not receiving treatment as nurses were protesting and demanding protective clothing. Nurses were arguing that attending to patients without personal protective equipment will put their lives at risk. Patients are now buying PPEs for the nurses to attend them. Local pharmacies were selling masks at US\$1.00 or ZWL\$87.00. This explains why most people who were in the CBD today were clad in home-made masks.

Chiredzi

Police and soldiers enforcing the lockdown in Ward 18 are harassing community members. On 6 May 2020, they harassed several community members who were putting on masks at a local Business centre. The only health center in ward 18 is Collins Saunders hospital which only accommodates Tangaat Hullets workers hence residents in ward 18, 6, 16 and triangle residents who are not Tangaat Hullets workers will seek medical attention in Chiredzi town. In addition, whenever the Ward receives food aid especially from the Department of Social Welfare, it is usually distributed on a partisan basis.

Bikita

Movement of people in Bikita has increased today as community members are now frequenting Nyika growth point and the other shops in the district. Community members are putting on masks whenever they are moving from their houses. Police officers are peacefully enforcing the lockdown and turning away those who do not have masks. Masks are being sold for US\$1.00 in shops and since most cannot afford them they have resorted to homemade masks or any cloth that can cover their mouths and noses.

Gutu

Community members are staying in their homes and in ward 6 a few people were seen at the shops. However most of these were not putting on masks. Police officers were present at Steven shops making sure that the shops are opened and closed at the stipulated times. Masks were being sold in shops for US\$1.00 each. At Matizha shops and Mupandawana Growth Point police are in full force ensuring that people are at least covering their mouths and noses despite the type of masks. Community members have been told that they will be fined ZW\$200.00 if seen without masks and moving around. Community members however are not aware of how long they are supposed to be wearing masks before disposing or washing them.

Zaka

Community members continue to stay in their homes. Business operations in Jerera growth point have increased and also the movement of people. Police officers in Jerera and other surrounding shops in the district are being so strict when it comes to wearing of masks. People are being turned away as well as being fined up to ZWL\$100.00 for not wearing a mask in public places. Masks are being sold for ZWL\$10.00 – ZWL\$25.00 each for the homemade ones although community members highlight that they are of poor quality. Those that are normally used in hospitals are being sold for US\$1.00 each as well as US\$1.00 for 3 in other shops.

Chiredzi

Movement of people in Chiredzi has increased and exemption letters are no longer of priority as people are now expected to wear masks. At roadblocks police are now making sure everyone has a mask on and turning away those without. Big grocery shops are also not allowing people entry without masks hence everyone is now forced to own one. Other people have also taken advantage of this situation to make masks and sell them to people at very high prices regardless of quality. Masks are being sold for ZWL\$20.00 as well as US\$1.50 and US\$1.00 each. Some continue to stay in their homes and those that operate informal businesses have now resorted to operating their businesses at their homesteads as well as door to door deliveries.

Mwenezi

Community members continue to stay in their homes and those who frequent the shops are expected to be wearing masks or be fined ZWL\$500.00 by the Police officers. People are using cloths as masks and those that are home made. Shops have not yet started selling masks.