

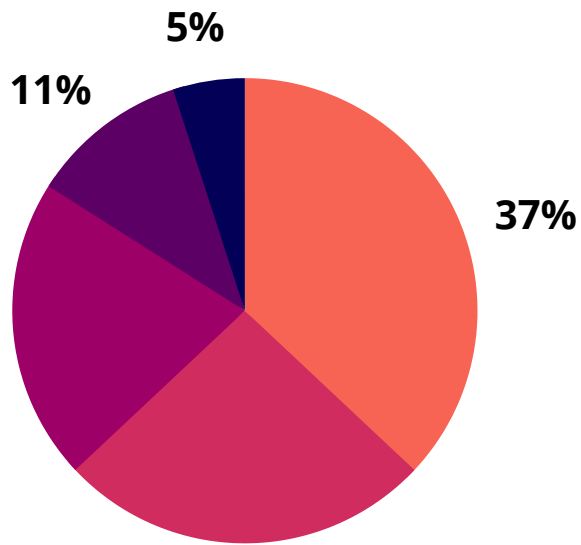
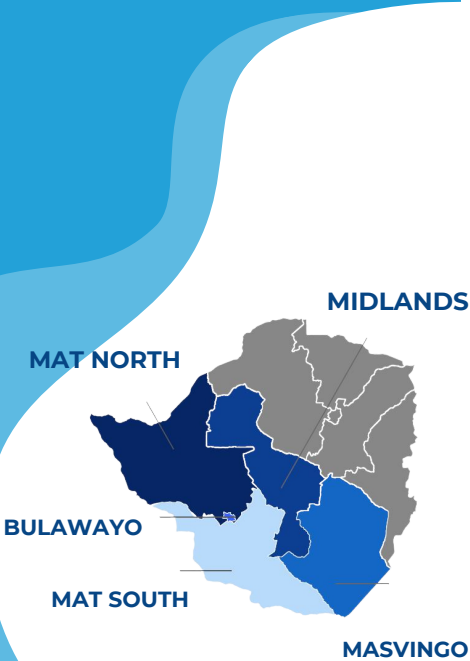


Zimbabwe

March 2022

Introduction to Rooted in Trust

Rooted in Trust 2.0 in Zimbabwe is a global information program funded by USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID-BHA) working with media, community-based organizations and health and humanitarian actors to counter rumors and misinformation about COVID-19 arising throughout the migrant communities in Southern Zimbabwe particularly in:










- The pandemic is being used for corruption
- COVID-19 vaccines are experimental
- COVID-19 vaccines side effects are adverse and lead to death
- COVID-19 masks do not work and should be abolished
- Testing for COVID-19 using the CPR is unnecessary and outdated

Methodology

The purpose of this bulletin is to help mitigate the spread of rumors and misinformation about COVID-19 in Zimbabwe. It seeks to provide community field workers and civil society organizations with recommendations and actionable information which they can use to mitigate the potential risk resulting from identified rumor trends. Rumor trends identified, and analysis done endeavor to assist humanitarian actors and health workers better inform their Risk Communication & Community Engagement (RCCE) strategies. Rumors in this bulletin were collected by Internews Zimbabwe's social media monitors from March 1, 2022, to March 20, 2022. Overall, Internews identified 149 rumors from various posts and comments from Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp.

COVID-19 situation overview in the country

-  The government announced the opening of land borders on the 8th of March for only vaccinated travelers who present booster shot vaccine certificates going in or out of the country. [Link](#)
-  The announcement to reopen land borders was followed by a 36% increase in the uptake of the booster shot with the number of people who have taken the booster shots increasing from 30,901 doses in February to 42,085 in March. (MoHCC,2022)
-  Vaccine rollout to children (12 years and above) continues as an attempt to reach herd immunity. Additionally, a national vaccination drive by MoHCC is scheduled to begin on March 21, 2022, to promote increased uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine.
-  Country vaccination data shows that 42,192 people received their first dose, 37,862 received their 2nd dose while 42,085 received their 3rd dose between 1-15 March 2022.
-  Total number of COVID-19 deaths for the month stand at 23 with the highest number (4) recorded on 12 March 2022. This is a decrease from 40 deaths recorded on the same period last month.
-  6,985 new COVID-19 infections were recorded between 1 March 2022 and 15 March 2022 an increase of 217% from 2197 new infections recorded from February 1 to February 15.
-  Rumor trends demonstrate that fears continue to loom around COVID-19 vaccines.

About Bulletin

The community bulletin is an in-depth analytical product that aims at providing community health workers, HCWs and field workers with easy-to-grasp information and recommendations for the communities, to enable them to better respond to misinformation in the community about COVID-19 and respond to the risks that misinformation poses in the community. The bulletin includes relevant, accurate, timely and actionable information, responding to the context in the community.

Rumor #1

Theme: COVID-General

Sub-theme: Masks

Fact Checking

- ✓ Countries such as Namibia, France and the United Kingdom have relaxed COVID-19 restrictions such as wearing of masks in public due to a decline in COVID-19 infections while South Africa is also considering easing the restrictions. In Zimbabwe it is still mandatory to wear face masks. However, this does not mean COVID-19 is no longer a threat as new cases are being reported across the world due to the relaxation in health measures as well as emergence of new variants and the general low vaccination rates. An increase in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations has been observed in Zimbabwe and in the Western Pacific, European, and African regions with countries such as Korea, Vietnam, Germany, France, and the Netherlands reporting the highest numbers of new cases. This is an indicator that COVID-19 is still present and a cause for concern.

Practical Resources

- <http://www.mohcc.gov.zw/>
- [Visual demo shows the effectiveness of masks and distancing.\(fastcompany.com\)](#)
- [demonstartions on mask wearing - Bing video](#)
- [Zimbabwe: Wearing Masks Now Legal Requirement - Zimbabwe Today_\(zimbabwe-today.com\)](#)
- [When and how to use masks\(who.int\)](#)

*COVID ipiko dzimwe nyika dzakubvisa mamask.
(Translation: Which Covid are you talking about, some countries are abolishing wearing of masks.)*

(Facebook 3/9/2022)



Recommendations

for outreach workers and communities

- Village Health workers through religious & community leaders need to demonstrate in communities that COVID-19 is still a threat and highlight the need to adhere to COVID-19 prevention protocols.
- Community health workers can carry out practical demonstrations on mask wearing and proper disposal during Easter gatherings at churches and at political rallies ahead of the March 26 By-Elections.

Rumor #2

Rumor theme: **Origion**

Fact Checking

- ✓ Health experts have refuted suggestions that the outbreak and spread of COVID-19 is linked to the installation of 5G mobile phone signal transmitters. Rather they have noted the origins of COVID-19 is most likely a large seafood and live animal market in Wuhan, China. [Link](#)
- ✓ Research has shown that the 5G conspiracy theory is a result of fake news that spread over social media during the early stages of the outbreak of COVID-19.

Sources

1. Outreach workers who need correct and accurate information on COVID-19 latest trends to inform communities can access the following: -
2. Ministry of Health and Child Care Platforms
3. Whats app Hub send HI: +263 714 734 593
4. Tollfree Hotline: Dial 2019 or 393

*Maybe he brought some more 5G transmitters for a vaccine
Don't we have real and better things to worry about than a conspiracy -*

Twitter

Recommendations

for outreach workers and communities

- Outreach workers may engage scientists for key messages and disseminate them through jingles and dramatization in local languages such as Venda, Nambya, Tonga, Kalanga and Ndebele to educate communities on conspiracy theories and how to avoid being misled by such theories.
- Community leaders and humanitarian organizations may partner in producing and distributing Informative Educative & Communicative (IEC) materials that enhance knowledge and understanding of the origins of COVID-19.

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