



The Humanitarian Bulletin

Zimbabwe
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ISSUE 4

About Rooted in Trust

Rooted in Trust 2.0 is a global pandemic information response program funded by the USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID-BHA) and implemented by Internews to counter the unprecedented scale and speed of the spread of rumors and misinformation on COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines.

Rooted in Trust 2.0 in Zimbabwe is working with media, community-based organizations and health and humanitarian actors to build a healthier information ecosystem that is responsive to the needs of migrant communities in Southern Zimbabwe, particularly in the provinces of Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, Midlands, Masvingo and Bulawayo. Our work focuses on vulnerable groups within these communities, especially on women and youth.

Check out the contact details of essential service providers at the end of this bulletin

Rumor data overview April 26 – May 26 2022



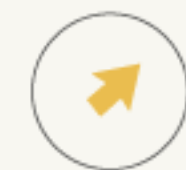
Internews Zimbabwe collected 329 rumors between April 26, 2022 and May 26, 2022. **79%** of the rumors were low risk, **20%** medium risk and **1%** high risk. The highest trending theme with **34%** of the rumors was on COVID-19 being used for corrupt purposes by government and the second highest trending theme with **30%** of the rumors was on COVID-19 vaccines being viewed as experimental. Other themes were that COVID-19 will cause mortality in the future (**13%**), masks do not protect against COVID-19 and must be abolished (**13%**) and that COVID-19 vaccines are expired (**11%**).



Senziwani Ndlovu
Project Manager



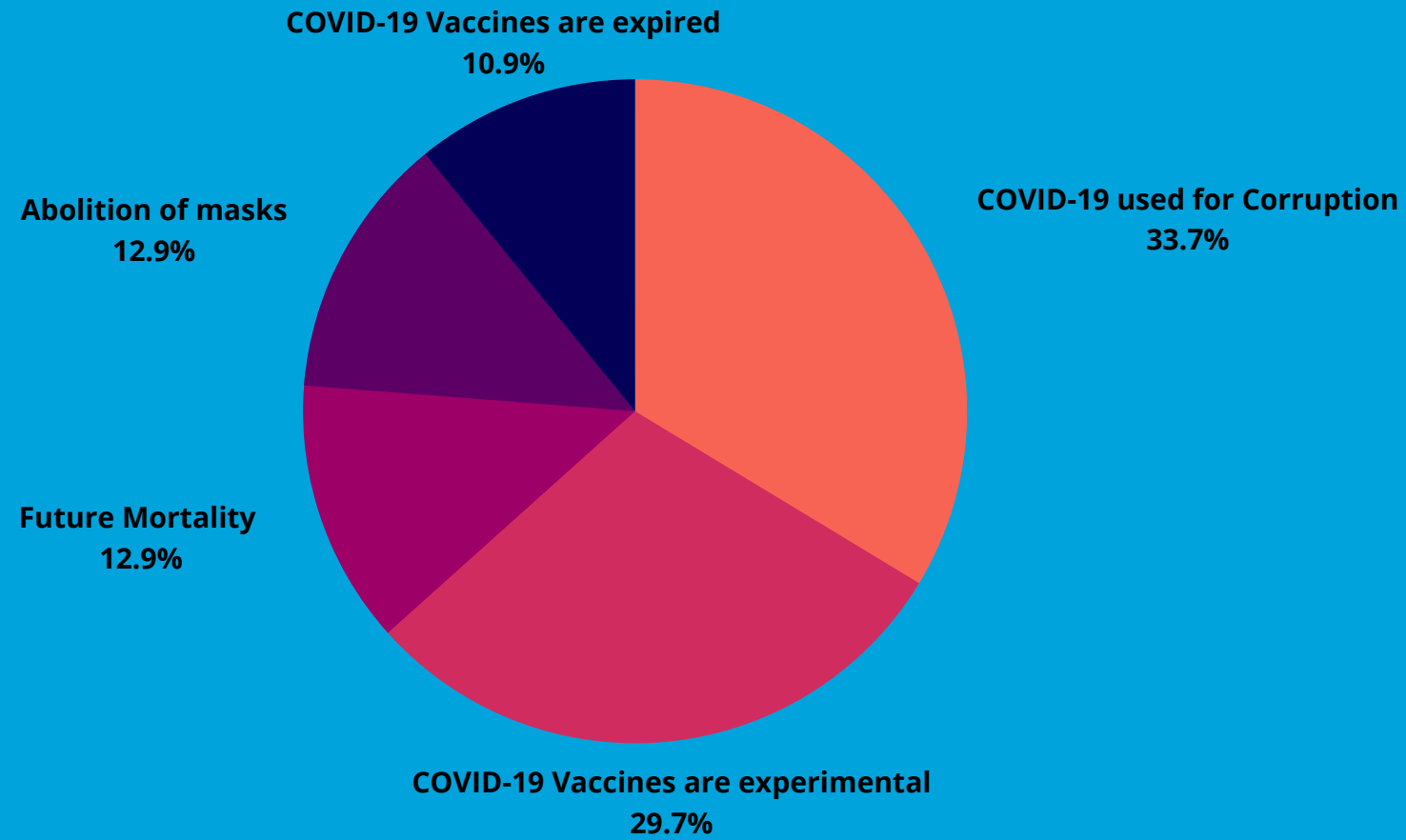
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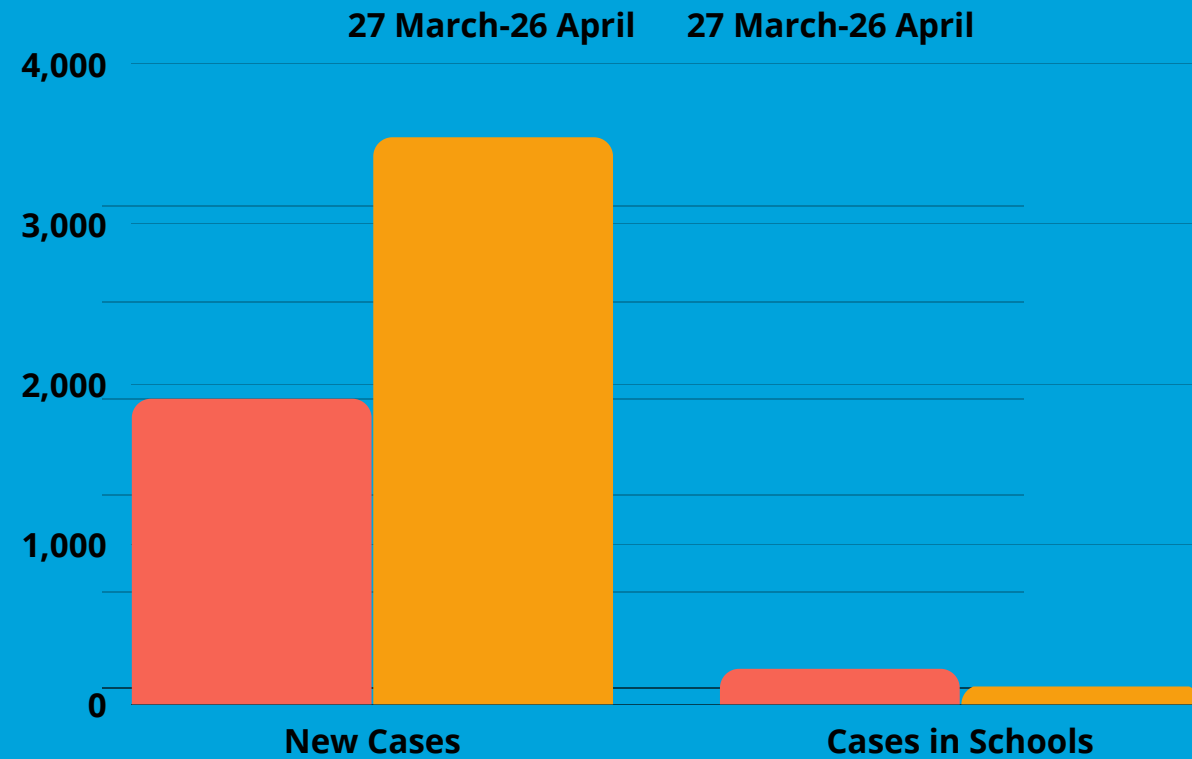


Trending rumor themes

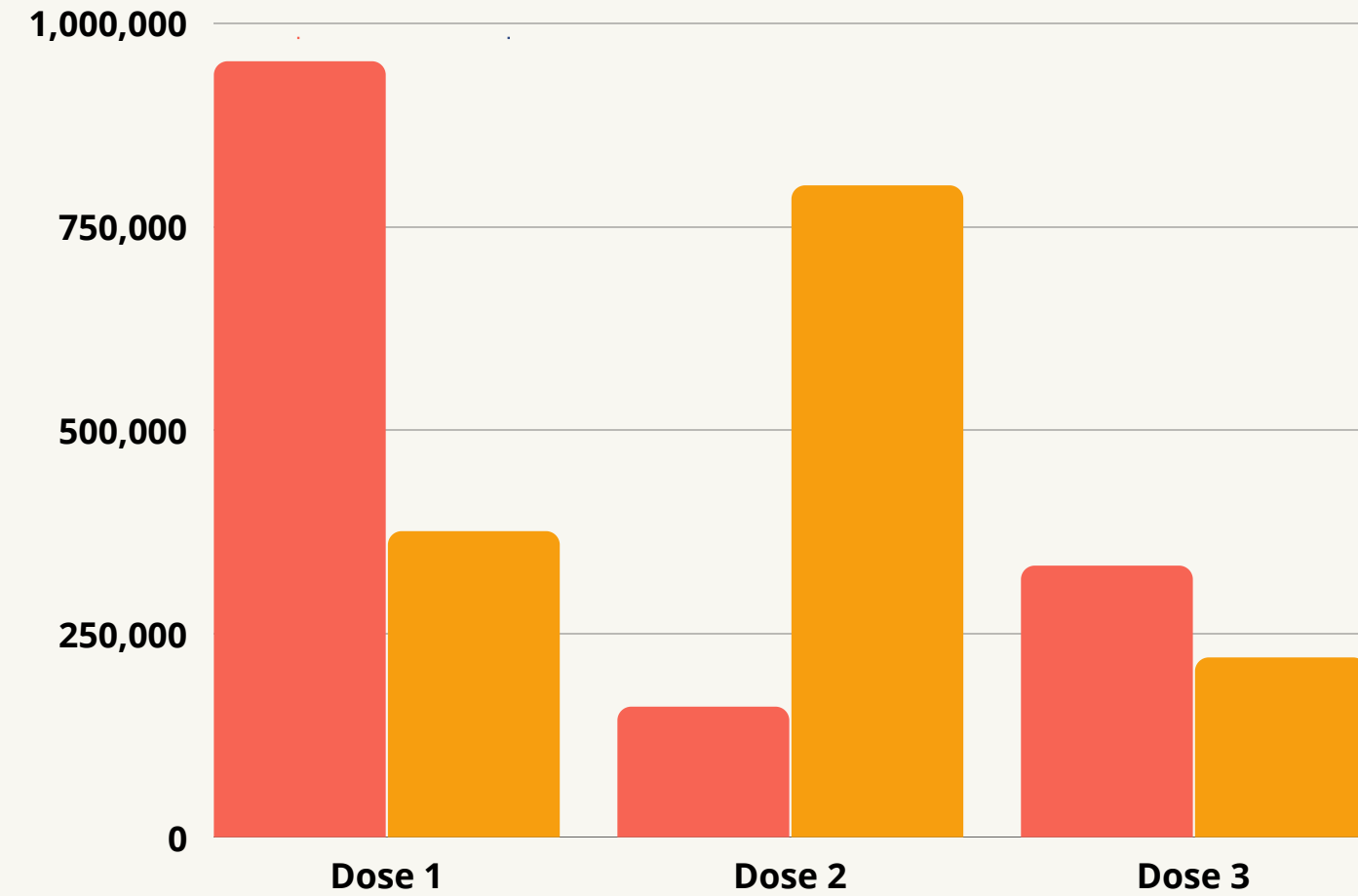


Visualization by RiT:
Data analyzed from (MoHCC, 2022) Statistics

COVID-19 situation overview in the country




Vaccination Statistics





Visualization by RiT :
Data from RiT Humanitarian Dashboard

COVID-19 cases rose by 36% on May 26, 2022 to 2588 active cases from 1904 active cases last month. In May 3539 new cases were recorded compared to 1907 recorded last month. Bulawayo and Matabeleland South have the highest number of active cases with 571 and 481 active cases respectively.

The number of people who received the second vaccine dose rose by 399% from 160,286 to 800,225 between April 26, 2022, and May 26, 2022. The increase may be attributed to the second round vaccination blitz targeting children aged 12-15 years. As of May 26, 2022, 62%, 45% and 8% of the herd immunity target of 10 million people have received the first, second and third vaccine shots respectively.



Fact check



Between January and November 2021, a total of 7,664 GBV cases were reported through the National GBV Hotline, indicating a 16% increase in cases compared to 6,600 recorded in 2020.

Researchers in Zimbabwe have noted the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's access to vital sexual and reproductive health services , GBV protection, and treatment for chronic illness.

Prevalence of mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression and stress and the breakdown of socio-economic support systems has contributed to the increase the rate of GBV incidents.

Recommendations

- Partners working with women, men and youth can conduct community dialogues on GBV in the context of COVID-19, where they bring in experts from organizations such as Musasa Project, Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association to talk about GBV and the help that they can offer. This can be aired on local community radio stations in local languages such as Shona, Ndebele, Tonga, Nambya and Venda.
- Humanitarian actors involved in RCCE work in communities, can mainstream gender programming in their COVID-19 response activities; focusing on providing revolving funds for women, men and youth groups to support income generating activities so that gender inequalities increased by the pandemic can be addressed.



01.

Rumor Trend

“ Data confirms that the pandemic has amplified challenges for women, and we need to talk about it more ”

THEME:
Post COVID-19

What's behind the rumor?

The rumor is in response to the MoHCC COVID-19 Sitrep (04/18/2022) and brings to attention that since the advent of the pandemic, situation reports do not issue disaggregated data to show the impact of COVID-19 on different demographic groups. The rumor seeks to amplify that COVID-19 has negatively impacted women more which needs to be discussed and highlighted in-depth in communities, but the issue is not getting needed attention.

Why does it matter?

The rumor highlights that COVID-19 updates exclude the effect of the pandemic on women and girls. Due the pandemic, women in Zimbabwe now shoulder the burden of providing primary health care to their families, at the expense of productive roles that give them income. The Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA), notes that women comprise 67% of the informal sector which is driving the country's economy and contributing significantly towards the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment. As women stay home due to lockdown measures and taking care of the sick it means that their livelihoods and those of any people they serve are negatively affected, and their households become susceptible to poverty.



Fact check

MoHCC statistics show an increase in new cases countrywide, with 291 new cases reported on May 26, 2022.



The launch of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) COVID-19 policy on electoral activities indicates commitment by the government to hold General Elections in 2023 while ensuring the health and safety of citizens.

The closure of the borders by the Government of Zimbabwe in 2020 was adopted as a strategy to safeguard the welfare and health of citizens following increases in COVID-19 transmissions attributed to migration between Zimbabwe and other countries.

Recommendations

- Humanitarian actors working with migrant and boarder communities can disseminate COVID-19 statistics & information to women and youth through trusted sources of information such as community leaders, local health institutions and community-based organizations to increase chances of believability & create feedback mechanisms.
- Partners working with migrants (cross border traders), women & youth can bring health promotion officers to speak about COVID-19 prevention measures such as wearing of masks, social distancing, sanitizing, vaccination and how these measures can be adapted to suit different contexts for example political rallies, church gatherings & public transport for cross border traders.

02.

Rumor Trend

They will close the borders, postpone elections, we know this has been their wish, wait and see. (Twitter March 29, 2022)



**THEME: Fears of
Government Control**

What's behind the rumor

The rumor is in response to a government announcement made on May 6, 2022, through the Ministry of Health and Child Care by Deputy Minister, John Mangwiro, who indicated they would soon tighten COVID-19 regulations especially at the country's borders due to the spike in COVID-19 cases in Zimbabwe and neighboring South Africa. Over the past 3 months rumors collected by RiT have been showing citizens' mistrust towards Government announcements and statistics.

Why does it matter?

The rumor reflects the politicization of COVID-19 in the country and the mistrust between the government and citizens. It is likely to create a negative attitude towards COVID-19 updates on latest trends and proposed mitigation measures announced by the government. Fears of possible closures of border may lead to increased exposure of women and children to illegal border crossing and human trafficking as they seek to escape to neighboring countries. Increased migration may pose a danger of migrants bringing new variants into the country and contributing to increased COVID-19 cases.

NAME OF INSTITUTION

SERVICES THEY OFFER

CONTACT DETAILS

Musasa Project

1. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
2. Counseling
3. Legal Aid
4. Medical Assistance
5. Shelter Services
6. Livelihoods and Economic Empowerment
7. Humanitarian Response
8. Toll Free

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ZWLA: Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association

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Court Monitoring
Mobile Legal Aid Clinics

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