



A product which provides a quick snapshot, on rumor data, analysis and recommendations.

Rumor theme: Prejudice/ Stigma

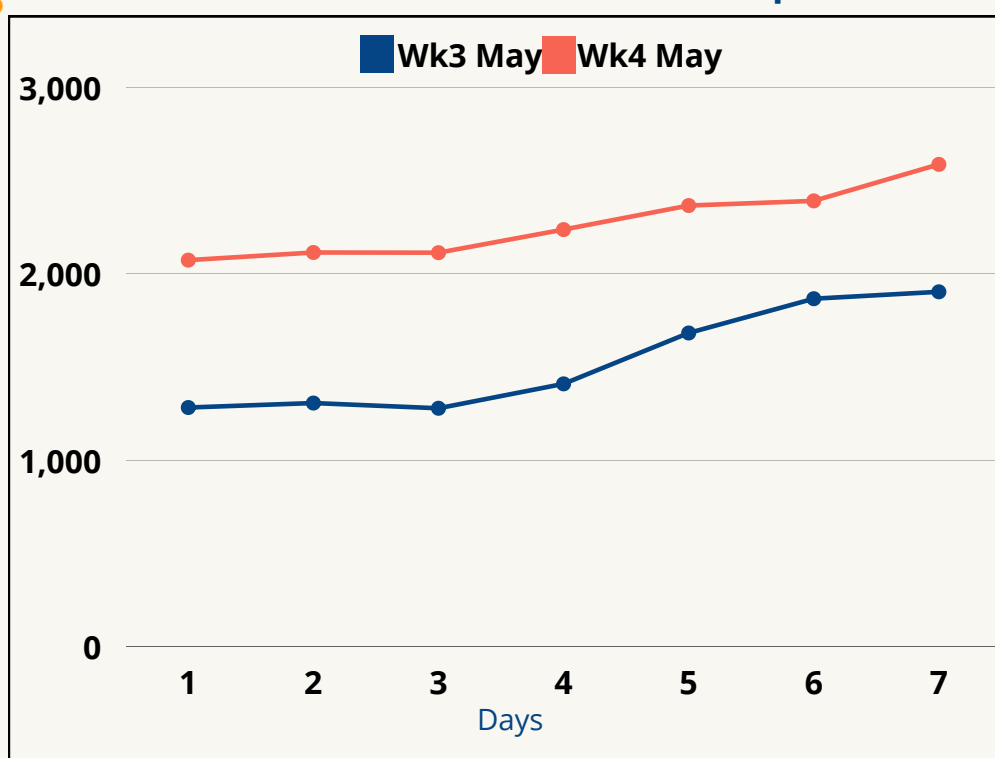
Rumor Trend

Rumor: The headquarters of COVID-19 is in South Africa and South Africa gets it from America/ If you go to South Africa, you will come back with Corona (Injiva ibe ithi ingaChimula abantu bebaleke)(Community)

Translation: The headquarters of COVID-19 is in South Africa and South Africa gets it from America/ If you go to South Africa, you will come back with Corona (If a South African cross border migrant sneezes people run away)

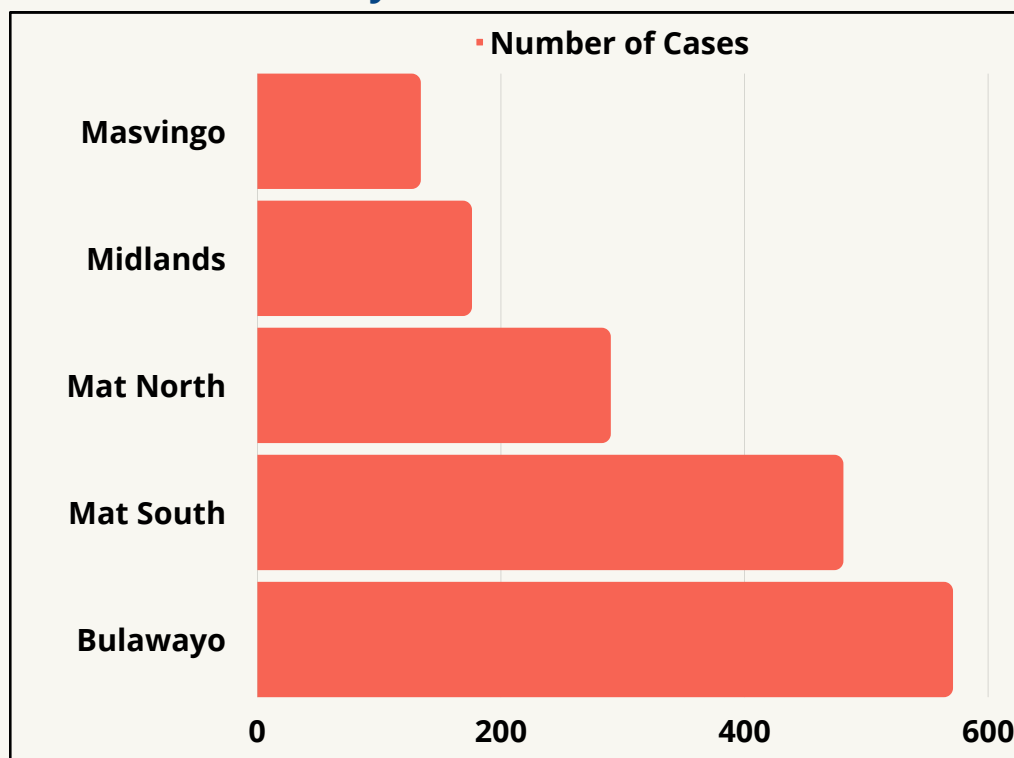
Rumor trend / Trend Analysis

Week-on-week COVID-19 Cases Comparison



Visualization by RiT: Data from MoHCC

Province by Province COVID-19 Cases



Visualization by RiT: Data from MoHCC

Zimbabwe COVID-19 active cases rose by **36%** with 2588 active cases reported in the week ending May 26, from 1904 reported in the week ending May 20. As of May 26, 2022, there were **44** hospitalized cases. **39%** of hospitalized cases were vaccinated and **61%** unvaccinated. Between May 20-26, 2022, there were no recorded COVID-19 related deaths. Bulawayo province has the most active cases at **571** cases followed by Matabeleland South with **481** active cases.

The third highest is Matabeleland North with 290 cases, Midlands is fourth highest with 176, and Masvingo last with **134** cases. **6,216,521** people have been vaccinated with the first vaccine dose, **4,508,195** with the second vaccine dose and **804,042** with the booster shot. The herd immunity target of 10 million fully vaccinated people with at least two doses by December 2022 stands at **45%**.

Why is this important?

South Africa has been significantly affected by Omicron sub-variants. Sentiments of the rumor stem from the fact that South Africa is the first country to report the Omicron variant, further noting that the fifth wave being experienced in that country was reported at a time when Zimbabwe's COVID-19 cases were low.

The rumor insinuates that South Africa is a COVID-19 manufacturer and hotspot, as it concludes that visitors from that country are incubators of COVID-19. It has implications of intensifying COVID-19 stigma on migrants from South Africa or Cross border traders in communities which may lead to hidden infection cases as communities may not disclose their illness or seek needed healthcare for fear of stigma.

What can we do as humanitarian organizations?

- Partners working in border communities like Plumtree, Victoria Falls and Beitbridge can engage women and youths to produce COVID-19 Edu-tainment (e.g., songs, poetry, drama, role plays) informing people on the origins of COVID-19, how its spread, the different variants and that anyone can transmit and be affected by the virus.
- Humanitarian actors working within border communities can educate communities on the different COVID-19 prevention measures that cross boarder traders and migrants observe in order to ensure safety of communities such as being fully vaccinated and providing negative PCR tests at designated points.
- Partners can continue to work with both the Zimbabwean and migrant community in solidifying and establishing interactions that are COVID-19 friendly and inclusive like continual mask wearing, practicing social distancing and sanitizing by all members of the community to ensure that people don't create stigma surrounding COVID-19.