

44,781*

CONFIRMED CASES IN 15 COUNTRIES

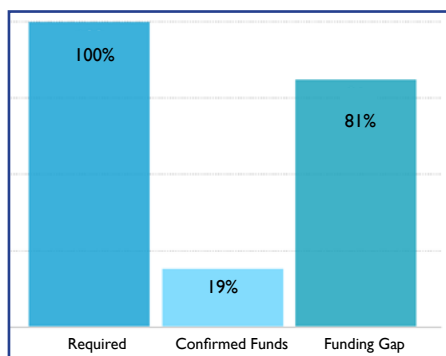
909*

DEATHS



\$49.9M

REQUESTED BY IOM FOR ITS SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL STRATEGIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLAN FOR CORONAVIRUS 2019



IOM Zimbabwe facilitated the voluntary return of over 90 Malawian Migrants from Zimbabwe to Malawi ©IOM 2020

*SOURCE: WHO COVID-19 Situation Dashboard: <https://covid19.who.int/>, 4 June 2020

OVERVIEW

Reported COVID-19 cases in Southern Africa continue to increase, though at a relatively stable pace. Countries of the region have augmented their public health responses and are maintaining stringent mobility restrictions. As of 4 June, over 44,781 cases and more than 909 deaths have been reported in the region.

IOM has noted reports of stigma and discrimination towards migrants in locations of origin, transit and destination upon their return, due to fears around COVID-19 transmission, which may lead to further exclusion from or unwillingness to access health and other essential services. Equally concerning is the increase in requests from governments for assistance to stranded and vulnerable migrants abroad, both in return and the provision of basic needs. Countries in the region have implemented border and travel restrictions. The majority of borders have been closed for the movement of people, with few exceptions, including border openings for the return of foreign citizens and repatriation of own nationals.

Many migrants have lost their jobs in the region and are particularly vulnerable to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. The repercussions of the aforementioned on remittances within the region may also have far-reaching consequences. During the COVID-19 pandemic, IOM expect a slowing down of remittance transfers at least in the immediate short term. This is because, the COVID-19 pandemic is global affecting both sending and receiving (EU, Middle East, North America, intra Africa) countries simultaneously as their labour markets gets impacted.

Based on the information collected by IOM from a range of data sources including national authorities, IOM missions, news media outlets, diaspora associations and other entities, over 63,000 migrants from SADC Member States returned to their country of origin since March 2020, most of them being self-returnees, with Lesotho, Mozambique and Zimbabwe being the three countries with the highest numbers of returnees.

In Southern Africa, many migrants have become stranded in transit and destination countries, lacking the means to return or are unable to return as a result of mobility restrictions related to COVID-19; and many migrants left destitute as they have lost their means of support and are unable to meet their basic needs or evicted migrants who have lost access to safe shelter. Some of the destitute migrants do not necessarily wish to return to the country of origin mainly due to political / security concerns. They have no choice but to stay despite the destitute situation caused by COVID-19 effects. Furthermore, the high rate of HIV prevalence among the migrants in Southern Africa should be given a special attention. Some stranded / destitute migrants stopped taking ART as they cannot refill their medicine while others stopped taking medicine as they can no longer afford to have proper meals. Some migrants already passed away due to the hunger and repatriation of body to the country of origin is a challenge as the poor communities cannot afford the transport and other necessary logistic arrangement.

Protracted internal conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo and north of Mozambique continue to generate internal displacement patterns which could further challenge the humanitarian response to COVID-19.

To address these challenges, IOM missions in the region are working with governments and partners to ensure that migrants, whether in regular or irregular situations, as well as returnees and forcibly displaced persons, are included in all aspects of COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts. IOM is also coordinating closely with governments on both immediate and long-term strategies for ensuring that travel remains safe, including through combined inputs from IOM's border management and health teams. In Southern Africa, as migrants across the region are facing increasing pressure as a result of COVID-19, IOM has established a platform with ambassadors from SADC Member States and UN agencies to coordinate humanitarian assistance for migrants in distress, strengthen partnerships with the diaspora community, and establish a platform for fundraising for humanitarian needs of stranded migrants.



IOM Malawi facilitated reception of 1,150 returnees from South Africa, United Kingdom and Zimbabwe, and provided them with face masks, alcohol-based hand sanitizers and onward transportation for most vulnerable returnees ©IOM 2020

RESPONSE

RISK COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In [South Africa](#), IOM, through the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and HIV project's Change Agents (CAs), is raising SRHR-HIV and COVID-19 prevention awareness, in the Nkomazi Municipality sites (including farms and squatter camp settlements) where the Department of Health (DoH) has been undertaking COVID-19 screenings. The project team has also been making use of radio messages to disseminate reproductive and as well as COVID-19 information, and continues to make use of social media to send out similar relevant messages.

In Chipata, IOM [Zambia](#), with the Ministry of Health and the Cross-border Traders Association of Zambia, and Implementing Partner – Chisomo Community Programme, continue to raise awareness through live phone in radio programmes broadcast weekly. During the period under review, the programme focused on raising awareness on SRHR-HIV and effects of Covid 19 on Cross Border Traders and the Host Communities (Mwami – Zambia and Mchinji – Malawi). About 1,400 people were reached on both sides of the borders.

In [Zimbabwe](#), IOM is in the process of engaging with local radio stations to disseminate tailored messages to the communities on COVID-19 preventive measures. IOM established billboards in five Points of Entry (PoEs), which will display tailored messages to communicate health risk and preventive measures to all returning migrants and mobile population. People crossing the borders will also be reached out through Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, to ensure health risk preventive measures and information is communicated to them during the quarantine process and upon arrival to the hosting communities.

In [Mozambique](#), IOM health teams, with the support of community-based activists, conducted home visits to 1,884 households resid-

ing in resettlement sites (3 in Dondo, 3 in Nhamatanda and 5 in Buzi districts) to educate family members about the COVID-19 disease, its transmission and prevention, and to support the uptake of preventive practices such as handwashing and the use of face masks through demonstrations. In the Cabo Delgado province, IOM completed the training of 80 out of 200 change agents, including migrants, young people and sex workers, in collaboration with an NGO partner under the Sexual and Reproductive Health 'It's Our Right' project (SRHR-HIV KNB). Change agents were capacitated to conduct mobilization activities on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, HIV, and COVID-19. The training modalities and contents were adapted to the COVID-19 context to respect precaution measures including small groups, hand hygiene and social distancing.

PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

In response to urgent request by governments and migrants affected by COVID-19, IOM in [Zimbabwe](#) in collaboration with relevant Zimbabwe authorities and Malawi Embassy Officials in Zimbabwe facilitated the voluntary return of 100 Malawian nationals who were located within three different holding facilities in Zimbabwe. The assisted migrants were travelling from Malawi en route to South Africa using the southern migratory route. Migrants using the southern migratory route to South Africa are affected by a range of human smuggling and serious human rights violations including sexual abuse, torture, exploitation, neglect and even death. IOM's assistance to return the migrants in a safe and dignified way to their country of origin has relieved the returnees from the very difficult and vulnerable situation that they found themselves with respect to the COVID-19 measures put in place by governments. The migrants were assisted through the Southern Africa Migration Management (SAMM) programme, funded by the European Union with the objective to reduce the suffering of vulnerable migrants in the Southern Africa region through the provision of life-saving humanitarian and voluntary return assistance, in response to some of the COVID 19 related needs.

INTERVIEW: COVID-19 and MIGRATION in Southern African

Guest: **Mr. Charles Kwenin**
IOM Regional Director
for Southern Africa

**SABC
NEWS**



1 June 2020

IOM
UN MIGRATION

Between 19-26 May, IOM [D.R. Congo](#) (DRC) visited Matadi, the capital of Kongo-Central. Matadi is, after Kinshasa, the city with the most COVID-19 cases in the DRC. IOM conducted a Population Mobility Mapping (PMM) in Matadi to determine locations for Points of Control (PoCs), which led to the establishment of 6 PoCs. The latter recorded a total of 16,826 screened travelers. One (1) alert was reported, which was validated to be a suspected COVID-19 case for further investigation. IOM also facilitated water, soap and the installation and equipment for 18 handwashing stations at the PoC. In addition, 42 digital thermometers for taking temperature of travelers; 3,000 protection masks which function as Personal Protection Equipment (PPEs) for the frontline workers and 124 plastic chairs were donated. Before the establishment of the PoC, 72 frontline workers have been trained by IOM on health screenings. 60 of them have eventually been deployed at the 6 PoCs. During the first two days of the functioning of the PoCs, IOM supervised the work of the frontline workers and provided additional on the job training.

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (IPC)

IOM [Mozambique](#) provided hygiene materials (66 buckets and 198 soap bars) to the Ibo District Government for the setting up of handwashing stations at water collection points.

In [Zimbabwe](#), IOM redirected activities from the counter trafficking program to assist migrant returnees with IPC materials and IEC resources, specially in vulnerable receiving communities, to ensure no negative coping mechanisms are adopted, and preventive measures are available.

IOM [Malawi](#) has provided Mwanza border officials with PPEs for use during the reception of returnees to prevent them from contracting the corona virus.

PROTECTION

In [South Africa](#), IOM partnered with an NGO called Refugee Pastoral Care to provide food parcels to migrants who do not qualify to get government social relief due to their status. About 150 Malawians, Zimbabweans and Mozambicans who live in the informal settlements received assistance. IOM also facilitated referral of one stranded returnee from South Africa who needed shelter, food, and psychosocial support to the Ministry of Population Planning and Social Welfare.

In [Malawi](#), Since 24 May, IOM has facilitated reception of 1150 returnees from South Africa, the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe and pro-

vided returnees with PPEs such as face masks, alcohol-based hand sanitizers and onward transportation for most vulnerable returnees.

CAMP COORDINATION, CAMP MANAGEMENT (CCCM)

IOM [Zimbabwe](#) has resumed CCCM activities to provide technical support to the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ), in the management and coordination of four (4) displacement sites that remain since Cyclone Idai struck the country on March 2019. Activities will be oriented toward relocalizations of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in a new land with transitional shelters. The GoZ will assist in the construction of permanent houses, to avoid overcrowding and health risks, and will provide a sustainable and long-term solutions to displaced population in a dignified manner. A camp exit strategy will be set into place and land reparation will also be conducted, to ensure host communities have the appropriate space.

IOM [Mozambique](#) CCCM Teams are tracking new entries into six (6) resettlement sites in Buzi district, Sofala province in coordination with site COVID-19 Committees; in the past two weeks, 90 new arrivals have been registered, who are individuals coming to join family members. IOM CCCM Teams coordinate with district level health authorities in Buzi and Dombe districts and site committees to pass key prevention and quarantine messages to new arrivals; these include handwashing, isolation and social distancing.

In response to the risks of increased human trafficking and other exploitation due to the COVID-19 climate, IOM [Zambia](#) conducted awareness raising activities in Western Province from the 25th to the 28th of June 2020. This was done in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Zambia with Government trained trainers on human trafficking and mixed migration form the Department of Immigration and Zambia Police. The awareness raising activities were aimed at raising awareness among community members and various key stakeholders on human trafficking and safe Migration with emphasis on ensuring that communities have been equipped with information on trafficking prevention including methods/means used for recruitment of victims and related consequences both economic and social. In addition the awareness raising was also aimed at educating the public especially the young people between the ages of 15 and 35 years who are seeking to migrate for economic reasons; to know their rights, detect trafficking scams and know where to seek help and report cases of trafficking.



An IOM South Africa Medical staff operates the clinic's X-Ray machine for pre-departure assessment. In South Africa, plans are under way to use IOM's medical unit Laboratory as COVID-19 testing centre to complement government's efforts to contain the virus ©IOM 2020

TRACKING MOBILITY IMPACTS

IOM [Mozambique](#) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) produced a *COVID-19 Preparedness Assessment in the Resettlement Sites in Sofala, Manica, Zambezia and Tete* Report 3 (May 2020) (click image below). In the 72 resettlement sites in the central region, where over 95,000 individuals reside, action has been taken for prevention and control in 97% of sites, and reportedly people living in all the sites have been informed of COVID-19 precaution measures.

IOM [Zimbabwe](#) is continuously conducting flow monitoring activities at the country's main border post, and is producing daily report on the inflows of migrant returnees into the country, to inform the humanitarian community, and tailor the response to the needs and vulnerabilities of the returnees. IOM also recruited two enumerators for Beitbridge, to scale up registration and profiling of returnees within the port of entry and quarantine centre.

IOM [Malawi](#) has been requested by authorities and stakeholders to be the focal point to provide information on returnees disaggregated data stakeholders will use for programming.

POINTS OF ENTRY (POE)

In [Zimbabwe](#), IOM, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Ministry Of Health and Child care (MoHCC), Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and District Civil Protection department (DCP), has assessed 60 identified facilities at provincial/district level, for processing of migrant returnees upon their arrival.

IOM [Zambia](#) conducted a rapid POE assessment at Nakonde border post as part of efforts to support the Government of the Republic of Zambia's COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts. Nakonde is a border town district and the location of the Nakonde –Tunduma One Stop Border Post with a high prevalence and incidence of COVID-19 infection, and is Zambia's epicentre of the pandemic. IOM also supported two parallel capacity building trainings on COVID-19. The first training was for health workers only and focused on COVID-19 Infection Prevention Control whilst the other training was multi-sectoral

and brought together all other POE agencies and stakeholders such as Immigration, Customs, Port Health, security, clearing agents and truck drivers associations. The multisectoral training focused on POE Standard Operational Procedures as well as an overview of IPC. Finally, IOM also handed over COVID-19 IPC equipment and supplies to the Ministry of Health to support effective response in Nakonde.

In order to reinforce surveillance and health screenings at POE/POCs, strengthen border agencies and IOM synergies, build a common knowledge and understand complementary roles in surveillance and response in the context of COVID-19, IOM [D. R. Congo](#) organized a training of frontline workers in Bukavu (South Kivu Province). The training enabled the frontline workers to be more capacitated to perform COVID-19 screenings, intercept COVID-19 cases, report alerts and trace contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases. A total of 38 workers were trained (15 of them female). The participants are all from different government agencies working at the borders, including Ministry of Health's National Program for Hygiene at Borders (PNHF), the Directorate of Migration (DGM), Direction Générale des Douanes et Accises (DGDA) and the Congolese National Police (PNC).

IOM [Malawi](#) supported the reception of Malawian nationals who came from Zimbabwe through the Mwanza border. Some of the returnees were on their way back to Malawi from South Africa and were intercepted in Zimbabwe. IOM also facilitated the onward transport for returnees to their final destination, and provided Personal Protective Equipments (PPEs) such as masks and hand sanitisers to the returnees and immigration officials. IOM also carried out a rapid assessment of the Kamuzu stadium, which is being used as a quarantine site. Additionally, IOM participated in an inter-agency rapid needs assessment in Mwanza in which sites to be used as reception centres in the southern region were propose and engaged with and provided guidance to the DoDMA on returnees' reception process flow that has been adapted by authorities and now being used as a standard procedure by all stakeholders when managing reception of returnees. IOM Malawi, in partnership with UNFPA, donated 1855 face shields, 150 N95 face masks and 20 medical gowns to the Department of Immigration to be used by all officials at the ports of entry.



Border closures and movement restrictions disproportionately affect those most vulnerable.

António Vitorino
IOM Director General



COVID-19 presents a global threat to which all are vulnerable. Addressing it, requires a global response.

António Vitorino
IOM Director General



In **Mozambique**, IOM is supporting the Government in the reception of returning migrants from South Africa, both regular and irregular. In May, over 600 returnees have been hosted at the Magwaza transit centre in Moamba district, before proceeding with their onward travel to their home communities mainly in the southern provinces. At the transit centre they received counselling and information on COVID-19 prevention and quarantine measures, screening and testing for COVID-19. IOM is providing logistics support to ensure good infection prevention and control conditions at the Magwaza transit centre. IOM is also supporting the follow-up of quarantine of the returned migrants when they reach their final destination, monitoring of any COVID-19 symptoms, as well as monitoring the condition of those (two cases) who have been tested positive for COVID-19 at the transit centre. IOM is also working closely with Government of Mozambique authorities to develop key interventions to enhance the screening, follow-up and tracing of truck drivers along major cross border corridors. IOM is conducting risk communication activities targeting truck drivers, through activists positioned at key transit hubs close to the major trade borders of Machipanda (Beira corridor) and Ressano Garcia (Maputo corridor). Activists use interpersonal communication and IEC materials to inform truck drivers on COVID-19 prevention measures, including social distancing, frequent hand hygiene and mandatory quarantine.

DISEASE SURVEILLANCE

IOM **Zimbabwe** is in the process of hiring environmental health practitioners, and enumerators, that will be deployed at 5 border post to register, profile and screen returnees and coordinate with rapid response surveillance teams in every province. They will conduct follow-up sessions with migrant returnees in the communities, after the 7 day mandatory quarantine period. This will reinforce surveillance, contact tracing and ensure further self-quarantine measure are taken into consideration when migrants return to their places of destination.

IOM **Mozambique** supports surveillance activities and raising awareness of Mozambican migrant workers who continue returning from South Africa to southern provinces through its network of community health workers and workers associations. Thus far, IOM community health workers called close to 7,000 migrants, and spoke with family members of each migrant, inquiring on the health of over 33,000 relatives. A total of 85 expressed symptoms and were referred for further assessment by health authorities, and 1 patient was diagnosed with COVID-19.

ADDRESSING SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT

IOM **Zimbabwe** has engaged with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to develop an intervention addressing livelihood assistance for migrant returnees, and vulnerable receiving communities, to avoid further socio-economic pressures due to COVID-19 national modalities; and to create immediate food source, as well as medium

to long term income generating activities, in order to reintegrate returning migrants in their communities.

CASE MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUITY OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES

IOM **Zambia** conducted a rapid technical assessment of Zambia Police Service ability to manage cases of GBV victims and survivors during Covid 19 and after. The exercise was done in four districts of Zambia namely Solwezi, Ndola and Kabwe situated in three (3) different provinces. The assessment focused on these provinces was based on the high prevalence GBV. The assessment helped IOM and Zambia Police identify the gaps that will need to be addressed to ensure that the case management system will be effectively and efficiently used once deployed.



On 22 April 2020, IOM's Regional Office for Southern Africa launched its [Regional Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan \(SPRP\) for Coronavirus Disease 2019](#), based on IOM's expertise in response to previous public health emergencies, such as the ongoing response to Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), as well as in other humanitarian emergencies which affected several countries in the region. The financial requirements (49.9M) represent an indicative requirement for IOM's planned interventions in the region, aiming to cover emerging health, humanitarian and socio-economic needs, while working with governments and partners to ensure that migrants in the region, regardless of their legal status, are included in local, national and regional preparedness, response and recovery efforts.



IOM acknowledges the support of the following donors in the re-purposing of existing grants or new funding committed to date. This seed funding has enabled IOM to initiate a few of the most urgent COVID related initiatives in the region:



European Union



Government of Canada



Government of the United States of America

