Socio-Economic Survey on the Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic on Zimbabwean Returnees
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Foreword from Chief of Mission

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on economies, health systems, and society in general. Global migration has not been spared, with COVID-19 mitigation measures restricting mobility like border closures and lockdowns. COVID-19 has shaped new migration trends and intentions of migrants, the push and pull factors influencing their movement, the effect of their immediate and long-term needs and their intentions upon arrival.

Over half a million migrants have returned to Zimbabwe since the onset of the pandemic. To better understand this dynamic context, IOM conducted a socio-economic survey on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Zimbabwean returnees in December 2021. The community-based survey tracked 3,587 migrant returnees from Harare, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland North, and Midlands and assessed the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. It gives insight into their demographics, vulnerabilities, their conditions of return and future aspirations.

The survey shows that 60% of migrant returnees were aged between 35 and 39 and over 71% percent of those surveyed came from South Africa, where over half of them had migrated through irregular means. Most of the respondents indicated that they were left facing serious financial hardships after the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the loss of their jobs. Without targeted interventions, these migrants could fall deeper into crisis or adopt negative coping mechanisms, a situation IOM and its partners are determined to support the Government of Zimbabwe to avert.

Our profound thanks and appreciation to our technical and funding partners the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) and the German Foreign Office who have supported this endeavor which provides valuable data to inform interventions that support sustainable reintegration of returnees by assisting them to rebuild their livelihoods beyond COVID-19.

Mario Lito Malanca
Chief of Mission
IOM Zimbabwe
Executive summary

This socio-economic survey aims to continue assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Zimbabwean returnees. We aim to understand what plans the returnees who came to during COVID-19 have and to ascertain whether they intend to settle in Zimbabwe permanently or plan migrate back to their host countries. The socio-economic survey objective is to disentangle the needs, vulnerabilities, demographics, and coping mechanisms used by returnees during hardships. This survey is the third Socio-Economic survey (R3) since the breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic. The preliminary results of the second survey (R2) and the first one (R1) can be found here and here, respectively. This report focuses on the findings of the third-round survey.

Methodology. The design of this study consists of a face-to-face questionnaire that was administered by trained enumerators. In total, 3,587 returnees participated in this third round. As a comparison, in round 1, we were able to collect information for 939 returnees and 1014 in Round 2. For the quantitative analysis, we used a simple random sampling and a combination of purposive and snowballing sampling data.

Ethical Considerations and COVID-19 Precautions. Informed consent was sought from all participants, and they gave verbal consent before the interview. Confidentiality of their personal information was guaranteed. For COVID-19 considerations, social distancing, wearing of masks and use of sanitizers was constantly used when engaging with the communities during and after the survey sessions. During Focus Group Discussions, an Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) person was assigned to keep reminding participants to adhere to social distancing and use of masks correctly.

Limitations of the Study. As the COVID-19 turns into its third year since the declaration of the emergencies, new challenges arise of vulnerable population looking to cope with its economic and social effects. While our approach was to administrate in-person questionnaire, few respondents were unable to be reached and, therefore, we administered these interviews telephonically.

Acknowledgments. This report was made possible by the data collection support of Zimbstat. The analysis and interpretation of the data was funded by the Germany Humanitarian Assistance.
1. Introduction

January 20 of 2022 marks the 2-year anniversary since the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 as a public emergency. Today, at the beginnings of 2022, the world is still finding its way through the pandemic and coping with the social, economic, and political transformations that it has bring about. As of 2022, WHO calculate a total global number of confirmed cases of 340.54 million cases and a total number 5.57 million deaths.

As governments navigate differently through the long-lasting effects of the pandemic, a common denominator has changed in the international and domestic mobilities of citizens. First, travel restriction and mobility recommendations are among the main measures still in place. According to the 2022 World Migration Report (WMR), by July 2021, 164 countries had established travel restrictions and 65 countries had restricted internal movements. Similarly, the flow of migrant networks across the world had reduced. Although, based on measurements from the 2022 WMR, the share of migrant across the world increased 0.2 percentage points, a total of 280 million migrants since its last measurement in 2015.

Although the flows of returnees had decreased since the beginning of the pandemic, the condition under which returns travel back to their home countries had change as well. With direr economic conditions in their host countries and with increased health vulnerabilities due to the pandemic, returnees, and their households in their country of origins need to cope with these new vulnerabilities and the possibilities of lost income sources because of the curtail of remittances. Zimbabwe is no stranger to this. IOM estimates that over 500,000 Zimbabweans returned home and pledged to support to the reintegration of returnees with USD 14.5 million in the frame of the newly launched IOM Global Crisis Response Plan 2022.

In order to understand the conditions and learn how to serve to the changing environment experienced by the returnees, the IOM has conducted the next installment of the Socio-Economic Survey collected in November 2020 that interviewed 1,031 individuals. This allows to track the changes among the returnees. The format of this study corresponds to community-based survey among a pool of tracked migrants from Harare, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland North, and Midlands. The community survey consisted of in-person interviews that asked returnees about their condition in their host countries, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and their return conditions and plans. The survey sample consist of 3,587 individuals from among an estimate of 500,000 migrants that that returned to Zimbabwe since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020.
Key Findings

- 3,587 among those migrants who returned to Zimbabwe in the last year were surveyed in 5 different regions of the country. 60% percent were ages 35 to 39.

- 71% of surveyed migrants came from South Africa. 57% of all sample were in irregular migration conditions and migrated looking for jobs and better economic opportunities.

- 97% and 83% of the returnees that were interviewed declared to had suffer of financial hardship or hunger, respectively, in their host country during the COVID-19 pandemic. 27% and 11% said that the pandemic affected their access to healthcare and education in reproductive health, respectively.

- Most of the returnees were employed, only the 11% declared to be unemployed at the time they left their host country. Therefore, loss of income sources is the main declared reason for returning to Zimbabwe, followed by the intention to provide physical support to their families in the country.

- 75% percent of migrant manifested they will settle permanently in Zimbabwe. The rest is considering returning to their last country of residence within 3 months or migrate to a different country.

- 95% percent of the returnees do not hold any savings from their stay in their last country of residence. Similarly, most of them (84%) do not expect to receive remittances from their family and friend located in their host countries.

- A temporary package of services that eases the burden of the transition to the country is recommended. Based on these findings, the package should prioritize/include small transfer of cash, easy access to health care, vocational programs to help returnees transitioning back into the labor market.
2. Demographic Profile

The Socio-Economic Survey is aimed to provide an outlook of the profile of Zimbabweans that returned to the country during 2021. From the sample of returnees, 60% percent are females while the rest identify as male. Both female and male returnees show a similar age structure. The average female returnee is 39 years old whereas the average male returnee is 37 years old. Figure 2.1 shows the population distribution by gender and quinquennial of age. Most of the respondents are between 35 to 39 years old, which constitute 19% of respondents. Very few respondents have less than 20 years nor more than 60. This contrast with the 2020 report where 63% of the respondents were male and were younger than the current sample of returnees.

Figure 2.1: Respondent distribution by age group and sex.

Among these migrants returning home, a significant number of them have dependents in their host countries. 19% of the returnees left a dependent in their last country of residence and 18% have a dependent in any other country besides their previous host country. Furthermore, most returnees have a dependent person in Zimbabwe. 94% expressed to have at least one dependent in Zimbabwe, and, on average, the returnees have 4 dependents. Each returnee on expectation has a dependent person over 18 years old and 2 dependents aged between 5 to 17 years old.
In terms of educational attainment, which represents an important variable to understand the profile of the returnees as well as their relative vulnerabilities and expected opportunities upon return, more than two-thirds of the respondents had completed secondary school as their highest educational attainment (75%). These mainly correspond to women, being 60% of those individuals who finished secondary school. Next, 17% of respondents have completed primary education. In contrast, almost 1% of the respondents had no formal education, while 4% achieve higher level of superior education ranging from a short cycle diploma to postgraduate education. Finally, 1% of the respondents had a kind of vocational education: apprenticeships, public and private certifications.

![Figure 2.2: Education level.](image)

Finally, regarding marital status, unregistered customary marriage is the most common status for both males and females, representing 32% and 51% respectively. Within gender, divorced female returnees represent 20% of all females, followed by widowed (15%), never married (12%), registered customary married (9%). In the case of male returnees, the second largest marital status is never married (18%), followed by registered customary married (12%).
3. Host countries

Following the trend that was presented in the 2020 community assessment of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on returnees in Zimbabwe in both round 1 and round 2, the main country where the respondent used to reside was South Africa, comprising a total of 2,559 migrants which equals to 71% of the total sample. This is followed by returnees coming from Botswana (12%), Mozambique (7%), and Zambia (4%). Below five percent of returnees were coming from other countries. In terms of gender breakdown, 60% of all returnees from South Africa, are females. This pattern is also present in all top 4 countries. Finally, the average age of all returnees, independently of their host country, is around 38 years old.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Host country</th>
<th>Migrants</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Average Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>2,559</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>1,548</td>
<td>1,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Migration Status

The migratory status of returnees at their host countries is described in this section. First, as shown in Figure 4.1, most returnees had an irregular status in their last country of residence. Irregular status, according to the definition of IOM, refers to the migration that occurs outside of the regulation specified by the laws each country and international institution. More than half of the respondents, 57% specifically, were in irregular conditions. Nonetheless, a third were considered regular migrants (32%), and 5% are asylum seekers and 2% are refugees. Related to this condition is the status of their travel documents. From the whole sample, 54% had ordinary travel documents, whereas 43% had none, and, just a few, 2% had temporary travel documents.
Similarly, almost all individuals did not hold any visa or permit by the time of leaving the country (90%). Only 315 individuals had a valid visa from their last country of residence when they arrived in Zimbabwe. Of those respondents, 44% were under employment/business visas, 35% had a visitor visa and 4% had a student permit. 25 were permanent residents. Very few individuals had a visa at some point and then turned into irregular, which suggest that the main source of irregularity regards to the mode of entry to their host countries. In addition, there is no significant different between females and males regarding their visa type.
Figure 4.3: Type of visa for those individuals with valid visas (N=332).

Visa type of those individuals with valid visa or permits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visa Type</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment or Business Permit</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitors’ Visa</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Residence Permit</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Permit</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Travel Permit</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A significant portion of the respondent returned after having migrated for a long time. Figure 4.4 presents the length of stay in the host country for the whole sample. In particular, 36% of the respondents (1,305) stayed in their last country of residence for more than 3 years. This is consistent with what we had found in R2 last year. In contrast, although no categories hold a significant share of respondent, we can see a little less than a third of the respondents did not stay for more than a year, while the rest stayed any time between 1 or 2 years.

Figure 4.4: Length of stay in the host country.

How long have you stayed in your last country of residence?

- Less than 3 months
- 3 to 6 Months
- 6 to 12 Months
- 1 to 2 Years
- 2 to 3 Years
- More than 3 years

1305
In addition, migrants were asked for the reason they originally departed Zimbabwe allowing for overlap between multiple reasons. The dominant reason for migration to their last host country was economic. About 1,255 individuals expressed that work for the solely reason why they migrated. In the case of financial issues, this reason accounted 1,943 returnees. A considerable number, 1012, to be exact, of the respondents identified with both of these reasons at the same time. Similarly, the third most mentioned reason is access to food and secure water.
5. Experience in host countries

5.1 Satisfaction regarding host country opportunities

Figure 5.1: Satisfaction with living conditions in host countries.

Satisfaction in your last residence with:

- Career Opportunities
- Education Skills
- Jobs Earnings
- Social Services

Migrants were also asked about the satisfaction they had from their experience in their last country. Approximately 38% of the respondents manifested that education skills were not applicable to their context of stay in their host countries, and about equal percentage of returnees were dissatisfied or satisfied with the education in their last host country. Similarly for career opportunities, about 26% of the sample expressed that was not applicable to their current situation in the host country. This can be associated with the profile of the returnees who on average are relatively mid-aged and might be looking for better economic conditions in the form of higher earnings rather than potential career investments or education. Consequently, factors such as access to social services and earnings where half of the respondents expressed fulfilling expectations, approximately 53% for both cases, reporting to be satisfied to very satisfied with the opportunities.

Nonetheless, there is very little intention to stay on host countries permanently. Most of the returning migrants expressed that they would like to stay in their home country and travel to their last host country
when they wish, representing 61% of the total sample. This represents approximately, 64% of all females and 57% of all males. On the other hand, 23% would still like to stay in their host country; and finally, 12% manifested that they would not like to travel back to their host country again.

Figure 5.2: Intention in regards to returnees’ last host countries.

### Intention in regards to last country of residence

Stay in my home country and travel here when I wish

- Female: 815
- Male: 1,385

Remained in that country

- Female: 371
- Male: 417

I will never travel to that country again

- Female: 186
- Male: 253

Not Sure

- Female: 59
- Male: 101

5.2 Vulnerabilities

Returnees were asked about their vulnerabilities while living at their host countries. This question had the format of multiple choices. Therefore, migrants could select many concurrent reasons. Almost all the 3,587 respondents faced financial hardship (3,506 individuals) or hunger (2,991 individuals) while living in their host countries. This followed a very similar pattern from the last socioeconomic survey, although there is a significant increase in the incidence of hunger, which increased 15 percentage points. Additional vulnerabilities include access to healthcare, information, and identification documents, which co-occurred with high probability with the previously mentioned hardships: 754 experienced both hunger and financial issues.

Considering the increased risk of the COVID-19 infection among age groups and people with health pre-existing conditions, we asked respondents about the presence of certain diseases. Overall, a quarter of surveyed returnees declared to have a chronic disease (26%). Out of these 939 individuals, the main chronic disease that has affected them is HIV with 44%, followed by hypertension affecting a 31%, and diabetes for a 10% of the sample. This represents an increase in the reported morbidity of returnees.
compared with a 14% of returnees surveyed in the last study. This suggests that a higher share of risk categories migrants is returning to Zimbabwe. Finally, there exist the possibility that the discovery of the Omicron variant in South Africa encouraged their decision to return and avoid contamination.

Figure 5.3: Co-occurrence of vulnerabilities.

In a similar note most of the individuals who suffer a pre-existing condition are taking medication. 81% reported to be taking medication. Finally, among the 171 individuals that who are not taking medication, high cost of the medication (44%) and perceiving there is no need for it (37%) are the main reasons for the lack of treatment.

Most prevalent chronic diseases

- HIV
- Hypertension
- Diabetes

Reasons for not taking medication

- High cost
- Long distance to health facilities
Migrants were also asked about the effects of the pandemic on their access to healthcare. Most of respondent do not believe the pandemic had affected their rights regarding: their access to services nor education/information on reproductive health. For the former 73% declared not affectation and 69% said the same for the latter. Nevertheless, this is similar to what was presented in the last survey round.

Figure 5.5: Covid-19 effects on livelihoods.
6. Economic Situation

As in the last survey, returnees were asked about their employment status, whether they were employed, unemployed, student, retired, self-employed or they were an employer themselves while living in their last country of residence. Most of the returnees were employed or self-employed. 2,597 respondents did remunerate work prior to their return where 42% of the respondents were employed and 31% were self-employed. Unemployment among returnees is still high, 11% which consists mainly of women, accounting for 69% of those unemployed.

**Figure 6.1: Employment Status.**

Although, high unemployment rates had a stark contrast with the observed in last survey in which unemployment was 50%, suggesting that 2021 had an improvement in economic conditions. Finally, 15% of the respondents do homemaker activities which again consist mainly of women (88%). Among those returnees that were employed, most of them worked in elementary occupations which were considered at more risk during the pandemic. 20% of them worked in elementary occupation, 18% of them worked in occupations that involved manual work, and 13% worked services and sales workers. Finally, 4% worked in managerial and technical occupations while 1% were part of the armed forces.

While in the whole sample, employed returnees was the most common employment status, this is different by gender. In regard to gender, 32% of all females were self-employed, followed by 31% employed females, 21% homemaker females, and 12% of all females were unemployed. In contrast, the vast majority of males were employed, 56% of all males, followed by 29% self-employed males, and 8% unemployed males. Other employment status such as subsistence farmer and unpaid family worker represented less than 1% for both female and male returnees.
7. Reasons for returning to Zimbabwe

Similar to previous questions, migrants were asked multiple choice questions regarding their reasons for returning. The vast majority of the returnees expressed that their return was voluntary, whereas 12% of them reported being deported. Among those who were not deported, the main reasons to return were: loss of job/income sources (1,527 respondents), providing physical support for their families in Zimbabwe (44%), and fear for personal safety (1,363 respondents). Moreover, according to Figure 7.1, there exists some likelihood for these reasons to overlap. For instance, 615 respondents identified with a set of at least two of these main reasons. Finally, 9% returned due to the expiration of their visas.

As the means of transportation back to Zimbabwe, most returnees used buses to travel back to Zimbabwe (78%). 18% used a private car as their main mean to return. Almost no returnee traveled by plane, boat, or train, and, 226 returnees expressed to had walked to return. Once in Zimbabwe, most returnees show interest in staying. While almost a fourth expressed to plan to return to their host country, half of this forth reported preferring to do it within three months from their arrival to Zimbabwe. In contrast, 24% of respondents that plan to return after a year or more.

Figure 7.1: Co-occurrence of reasons for returning to home country.
Regarding the plans of returnees that decide to travel back to their host countries, upon returning, their plans are mainly to search for new jobs (52%), continue their jobs (29%), or start a business (16%).

**Figure 7.2: Tentative time for returning.**

**When you would you like to return?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In 2 years</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a year</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In 6 months</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In 3 months</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a month</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 7.3: Plans if returning to their last country of residence.**

**Co-occurrence of plans upon returning to last country of residence**

Lastly, we were interested in knowing on the strength of social networks of the returnees in their host countries, especially for those who desire to return. **Figure 7.4** shows whether the respondent declare to have stable connection such as family and friends in their last country of residence. Of the 957 individuals
that plan to return, 69% had stable networks of people to return and rely on, which 25% are among those who declared to have dependents in the host country. Moreover, there are no significant differences in social networks based on gender nor age of respondent.

Figure 7.4: Stable networks.

While three-fourths of respondents do not plan to return to the last country of residence, 107 look at themselves moving to another country. These returnees are planning to migrate to new countries which are already among the main known hosts. Among those returnees that plans to move to another country, their countries of preference are: South Africa (21%) and Botswana (14%); with the addition of the United Kingdom (23%), other African countries (24%). Nonetheless, the majority of returnees plan to settle permanently in Zimbabwe (90%).

8. Economic situation upon return

Finally migrants were also asked how their current economic situation will help them to cope with their return. The vast majority are not returning to Zimbabwe with savings from their last host country. 95% of the respondents do not have savings and only 167 respondents do. Of them, 41% will be able to access those savings outside of the respective countries where the respondents used to live.

Similarly, to savings, about the same share of returnees expressed not to anticipate financial support from friends or relatives from outside Zimbabwe (84%), 595 respondents do think they will receive some help with a frequency such as 39% monthly, 42% quarterly, and 17% yearly. Receiving the support mainly through money transfer agencies (91%).
To cope economically with the return of the respondents, 55% of the respondent’s families are expected to engage in more work 15%, and 6% will sell assets such as houses or livestock. 14% plan to get assisted by a friend or NGO (16%). Finally, 8% will likely borrow money and 7% reduce food consumption. Additionally, with the COVID-19 pandemic, additional challenges are planned to be addressed in the following ways: 65% plan to sell goods or belongings, 37% plan to sell labor, 12% had considered borrowing money, and finally, 12% and 5% hope to get support from NGOs or government, respectively.
9. Conclusions

As the COVID-19 turns into its third year since the declaration of the emergencies, new challenges arise of vulnerable population looking to cope with its economic and social effects. As mentioned before, return migrants are important member among those vulnerable population. For the case of Zimbabwe, the conditions for the return migrants and their expectative/plans as they transition to their lives in the country was tracked.

This report corresponds to the third data collection IOM Zimbabwe has conducted with the purpose to assess the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19. This survey allowed us to understand the needs and challenges that migrants face as well as recognize the coping mechanism returnees rely in order to address them. Based on a sample of 3,587 individuals, it has been identified that:

• Most returnees had completed secondary education, are on average 38 years old and, according to our sample, are mostly women. 94% of the returnees had dependents in Zimbabwe while 19% of them left dependent in their last host country.

• As in previous rounds, South Africa is the main origin of returnees. 71% of return migrants came back from South Africa. Most returnees traveled to their host countries for economic reasons, being job opportunities the reason with the highest share. Approximately half of returnees had irregular migration status in their host countries, and likewise, approximately half of returnees had valid travel document by the time they returned to Zimbabwe.

• Different from previous rounds, 11% of the returnees were unemployed in their country of residence. Most of returnees declared to have a job or had performed self-employed activities. Although this suggest that their return might be guided by other reasons, financial issues is still the main reason for their return, with a very similar share expressing that personal and physical health were also significant reason.

• Approximately 75% of returnees are planning to remain in Zimbabwe. Most of the remaining 25% of the returnees that are planning to leave the country are expected to return within a month despite Zimbabwe being also socio-economically impacted by COVID-19. For those who are still expecting to leave to another country, South Africa profiles as one of the possible destinations followed by Botswana and the United Kingdom.

• 95% of the respondents do not have savings in their last country of residence and among the 176 that do, 60% do not have access to those savings. Remittances are not among the expectation of most returnees, only 14% consider that family or friends will send money to them in Zimbabwe.

• Hunger, financial issues, and access to medication are among the biggest vulnerabilities that return migrants faced in their host countries amid the COVID-19 pandemic. This is especially salient when considering that, among all returnees, 26% expressed to have at least on pre-existent condition. A fourth of them did not take medication, expressing the high cost of drugs as the main reason for it. In that note, similar to previous rounds, a third of the respondent declared that COVID-19 created challenges to access health services and reproductive health information.
Based on those findings we suggest the following recommendations:

1. The loss of jobs due to the pandemic seems a smaller but still important reason for returning to Zimbabwe. Among other reasons, health care services and wordiness about physical health have a significant share. Based on this stress, previous recommendation for the Government of Zimbabwe to facilitate access of these migrants to health care services.

2. Even if Zimbabwe was socio-economically impacted by COVID-19, migrants are returning to the country with little financial safety net to curb with the challenges of their return. This imposes a burden in the families of the returnees which might have to sell household assets to cope with this burden. It is recommended a system of temporary cash transfers to ease the burden of returnee’s families. It is also worrisome that hunger was the second highest vulnerability among returnees. Thus, it is also recommended that this transfer is accompanied with additional food security programs ensuring that basic rights will be met during the transition of returnees.

3. Half of returnees do not hold valid documents by the time of their return. Access to formal identification is a basic requisite so migrant can access institutions that would protect them from human trafficking, and other forms of crime. Therefore, the importance of providing safeguards for returnees that can allow them to opt for better ways of returning to Zimbabwe is also emphasized.

4. Although most return migrants expressed their desire to stay in Zimbabwe, a quarter of migrants will still re-migrate back to their last country of residence or to another country. This suggest that a share of migrants still do not consider that Zimbabwe can satisfied certain financial needs. Therefore, income generating activities programs that aim to reintegrate returnees to the local labor markets are recommended.

5. We finally thank and encourage the Government of Zimbabwe and the Germany Humanitarian Assistance to continue supporting research initiatives that provide valuable information to inform and guide them in their policy design.
ADDRESS

International Organization for Migration (IOM)
4 Duthie Road
Alexandra Park
Harare
Zimbabwe
Tel: +263 242 704 285/88/90
Website: www.zimbabwe.iom.int
For more information kindly contact DTM Zimbabwe at dtmzimbabwe@iom.int

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