A photograph of a rural mining area with a large green circular overlay containing text. In the background, a person wearing a hat and a vest is working with a large log. The ground is dirt and there are some wooden structures and a bicycle in the distance.

An Assessment Of The Impact Of The COVID-19 Pandemic On Migrant Mineworkers And Families In Selected Countries

January 2021



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

Contents

Executive Summary	4
Overview	6
1. Setting the Scene	6
1.1 Background	6
1.2 Objectives	7
1.3 Methodology	7
Section A: Current Mineworkers	11
2. Results and Analysis Current Mineworkers	11
2.1 DEMOGRAPHICS	11
2.2 ACCESS TO COVID-19 INFORMATION	11
2.3 IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY	12
2.4 IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS	14
2.5 IMPACT ON HEALTH	15
2.6 KEY CHALLENGES	17
2.7 KEY NEEDS	17
3. Discussion Current Mineworkers	18
4. Recommendations for Current Mineworkers	19
Section B: Ex-Mineworkers	20
5. Results and Analysis Ex-Mineworkers	20
5.1 DEMOGRAPHICS	20
5.2 ACCESS TO COVID-19 INFORMATION	20
5.3 IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY	21

5.4 IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS23
5.5 IMPACT ON HEALTH25
5.6 KEY CHALLENGES26
5.7 KEY NEEDS27
6. Discussion Ex-Mineworkers28
7. Recommendations for Ex-Mineworkers30
8. Conclusion31
9. References32
10. Annexures33

Executive Summary

The Southern Africa Trust commissioned Health Focus South Africa (HFSA) to conduct a rapid assessment to collect data and information on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected and impacted current mineworkers and their families and ex-mineworkers and their families over the past 6 months. The rapid assessment was conducted via a brief telephonic survey in the following countries: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and South Africa during the month of November 2020. The survey looked at the past 6 months and focused on 4 core areas:

1. Access to information on COVID-19;
2. The impact of the pandemic on their livelihoods, finances, food security and access to health care;
3. The challenges experienced and
4. The urgent needs identified

In total, 20 current mineworkers and 44 ex-mineworkers were interviewed across the 4 countries. An analysis of the findings revealed the following:

- 100% of respondents indicated they had good access to information on COVID-19 from a variety of sources and all understood how the virus could be transmitted.
- COVID-19 had an impact on food security, but this was most noted in the ex-mineworker cohort who ate less of their preferred foods or skipped meals. This was largely linked to financial challenges.
- Access to healthcare was predominantly impacted as a result of movement restrictions for both cohorts.

Overall, the key challenge felt by the respondents was the impact on their income and the resulting effects this had on their day to day lives and households. This was most felt by the ex-mineworker cohort who mainly deal in the informal economy. In addition, at the time of the survey, over 50% of ex-mineworkers were applying for compensation or trying to unlock social protection benefits and found this to be more of a challenge than usual owing to the movement restrictions and closure of services.

In terms of the key needs, the current mineworkers identified the importance of keeping the economy going and ensuring jobs and income generating opportunities. This was also resonated as a key need by the ex-mineworkers, but they also identified food security and grants or relief funds

as an equal priority. The key needs from both the current and ex-mine-workers were identified as follows:

1. Availability of appropriate job opportunities and income generating abilities
2. Adequate food security measures
3. Timely access to relief funds/Grants/Social Benefits

Despite the limitations to this rapid assessment the results resonate with similar COVID-19 surveys and data outlining the negative impact that COVID-19 has had on people's livelihoods, particularly for those whose livelihoods are based within the informal sector. Hence, the impact of COVID-19 has to a large extent been felt more by the ex-mineworkers and their families. However, the sample size was very small and is by no means representative of the key populations and it is therefore recommended that an urgent further assessment needs to take place with a larger sample size that is more representative for both cohorts. This survey should also compare the baseline information generated in this report.

The key recommendations are as follows:

1. Another assessment needs to be undertaken urgently with a larger representative sample size
2. Governments should fast track the unlocking of social protection benefits and compensation thereby enabling immediate relief.
3. Enabling support for former migrant mineworkers through socio-economic development programmes which focuses on reskilling and vocational rehabilitation
4. Although healthcare was not highlighted as a major issue, the ex-mineworker population already have comprised lung functions and are at high risk as the pandemic spreads. Anecdotally, we recommend that access to healthcare (PPE, sanitizers, masks) and oxygen therapy is ramped up in preparation.

Overview

1. Setting the Scene

1.1 Background

Migrant Mineworkers

It has been reported that the South Africa mining industry was dependent on migrant labour from neighbouring countries. There is a legacy of more than 1.2 million ex-mineworkers who came from across the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as well as from provinces within South Africa, to work on the mines in South Africa. At present the current mineworkers constitutes approximately 450,000 migrants from neighbouring countries.

Mining companies made social security contributions on behalf of mineworkers into South Africa institutions. It is estimated about 10 billion Rands is owed to mineworkers in social security benefits. The funds held in South African social security institutions, have been accumulating over many years due to multiple challenges for ex-mineworkers in accessing these benefits. This lack of access to their owed social security benefits has had social, economic and health consequences to the former mineworkers and their families.

Some of the ex-mineworkers in the region also suffer from dust related occupational lung diseases like silicosis or pneumoconiosis and have some of the highest Tuberculosis (TB) incidence rates in the world. Ex-mineworkers can develop silicosis and other occupational lung diseases long after leaving the mines but do not make the connection between their previous employment and the disease. Most of the ex-miners have not received compensation related to these occupational diseases. The process of accessing compensation is administratively challenging and requires medical examination. Numerous service providers, Occupational Health Service Centres (OHSCs) and One Stop Service Centres (OSSCs) have been set-up within the region to facilitate access to benefit medical examinations (BMEs) for compensation and to diagnose TB.

The Challenges of COVID-19

At the end of July 2020, it was reported that there have been 73 deaths due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the mining sector. The Mine Health and Safety Council reported that as of the end of July 2020, 7 953 miners have tested positive for the coronavirus, 4 149 have recovered and 3 731

were still infected. This is likely to place significant challenges on current mineworkers in terms of their health and livelihoods.

During the lockdown, BMEs required to process an occupational lung disease claim for ex-mineworkers could not be conducted due to the high risk of transmission for these vulnerable groups. The Medical Bureau for Occupational Diseases (MBOD) and the in-country OHSCs were closed for several months as many countries deemed BME services to be non-essential during lockdown. In addition, the BME process requires a lung function test. The South African Thoracic Society issued a position statement in line with international respiratory society guidelines, stating that no lung function tests be conducted during this period due to the need to obviate or minimise aerosolization procedures that may contribute to the spread of the coronavirus. The COVID 19 pandemic has therefore posed additional challenges for ex-mineworkers; not only to claim their owed social security and compensation benefits but also to access health care and treatment for existing comorbidities from the contracted occupational diseases. This too would have placed challenges on ex-mineworkers in terms of their health and livelihoods.

1.2 Objectives

The Southern Africa Trust commissioned a rapid assessment to collect data and information on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected migrant mineworkers, former mineworkers and their families. This was to be conducted via a brief telephonic survey to address the following objectives:

- How accessible is information on COVID-19 and how did they access this?
- What has been the impact of the pandemic on their livelihoods, food security, access to health care and finances?
- Beneficiaries – What are the challenges experienced since the outbreak of the pandemic by former mineworkers/ beneficiaries to access social security and compensation benefits?
- What are the top challenges experienced?
- What are their urgent needs?

As such this rapid assessment aimed to gain a better understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on current and ex-mineworkers and their families.

1.3 Methodology

Even though this was a rapid assessment, research principles were applied to ensure a level of rigour and robustness to the process. The methodology is outlined below.

Research Population

The research population comprised of 2 cohorts namely:

- Current mineworkers and their families and
- Ex-mineworkers and their families.

These 2 cohorts came from the following four countries in Southern Africa:

- Botswana;
- Eswatini;
- Lesotho;
- South Africa.

Sample Size

The total sample size was 60 respondents. This comprised roughly of a 50/50 split between the 2 cohorts, with an average total of 15 responses from each of the four countries.

Sampling Method

The sample was selected using the purposive sampling method, whereby participants were drawn from the available databases and networks of the migrant and ex-mineworker associations and the researcher in South Africa. A convenience sampling approach was applied, where the research team was not able to identify enough numbers of participants according to the stratification criteria.

Process

- Recruitment of local migrant and ex-mineworker association fieldworkers and researchers
- 60 telephonic surveys conducted in the local language by the fieldworkers and then translated into English
- Compilation of the data
- Review and analysis of the data
- Development of the report

Research Team

The research team comprised of the lead researcher who designed the tool in consultation with the internal research team and then approved by the client. Data was analysed by the Health Focus team and written up by the lead researcher. HFSA utilised the services of independent consultants who worked closely with the survey cohort in each country. These consultants all have long established relationships and networks with the research population.

Data Analysis

The survey tools combined open-ended and close-ended questions. The close ended questions responses were uploaded into the software; Qualtrics® for analysis. The open-ended questions were coded and analysed using thematic analysis. The results are presented using descriptive summary statistics. This is then followed by narrative descriptors and participants quotes for the analysis to provide context and insights into the experiences of the interviewees and their families. The findings were also linked to publications, articles and other studies in order to use anecdotal evidence to make recommendations.

Confidentiality

The survey tool captured only demographics of the respondents and no personal identifiable data or information. On a separate spreadsheet, the fieldworker provided a unique identifier for each respondent randomly selected. This spreadsheet was password protected, managed and kept secure by the fieldworker, should there be a need to trace source. As such, the reporting of the data, findings and presentation of outcomes was anonymised.

Consent

As this is a telephonic survey, verbal informed consent to engage in the survey was sought by the fieldworker in line with the consent scripting. Interviewers were allocated ample time to explain the purpose of the study and to answer any questions interviewees had. Participants could decide to discontinue the interview at any point and would not be required to explain their decision to withdraw from the study. The outcome of the content process will be documented on the survey tool.

Survey Tools

Two survey tools were developed for each of the cohorts. These can be found in:

- **Annexure A:** COVID 19 Impact Survey: Current Mineworkers and their families.
- **Annexure B:** COVID 19 Impact Survey: Ex-Mineworkers and their families

Training on administering the survey tools was provided to all fieldworkers via an interactive zoom call. In addition, scripting was also provided to aid in conducting the survey and gaining consent. This can be found in **Annexure C:** Fieldworker Scripting for Survey;

The results for the 2 cohorts are presented separately in 2 sections; Section A: Current Mineworkers and Section B: Ex-Mineworkers.

Section A: Current Mineworkers

2. Results and Analysis Current Mineworkers

2.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

The table below outlines the demographics for the 20 respondents from the surveys conducted on the current mineworkers. Unfortunately, no current mineworkers in South Africa were interviewed.

Total Number	20 Respondents
Gender	18 Male and 2 Female
Average Age Group	36 – 65 years
Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Botswana = 6 Eswatini = 4 Lesotho = 10

Table 1: Current Mineworker Demographics

2.2 ACCESS TO COVID-19 INFORMATION

Sources of Information

The current mineworkers were all asked about where and how they accessed information about COVID-19. Multiple answers or sources of information could be selected. Those with the highest profile included the mine, radio/tv; internet/social media and family and friends. 100% of all current mineworkers had received information about COVID 19 and indicated that this had been from multiple sources. The figure below is a dashboard of the sources of information.

	RADIO TV NEWSPAPER	27%
	FAMILY	20%
	THE MINE	20%






	FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS	16%
  	INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA	10%
	TEXT ALERTS MOBILE PHONE	7%

Figure 1: Source of COVID-19 Information for Current Mineworkers

Awareness of COVID-19

All the current mineworkers displayed an excellent awareness of COVID and how it is transmitted. The survey question provided multiple options for the respondent to choose from, some options being incorrect in terms of COVID-19 transmission. However, all the current mineworkers selected the correct responses, recognising that this was through a COVID-19 infected person sneezing/coughing/spitting close to you or from touching infected surfaces; to shaking hands with an infected person.

2.3 IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY

Food Situation at Home Over the Past 6 Months

The current mineworkers were asked about their food situation over the past 6 months. The figure below displays their responses, with 50% of the mineworkers indicating that they ate less of the food they preferred and 10% indicating that they skipped meals or ate less than usual. It was noted that 15% stated that they increased their food intake and reported that this was because they were not working and at home the whole day. Figure 2 below outlines their responses:

Food Situation at Home Over the Past 6 Months



Figure 2: Food Situation at Home Over the Past 6 Months

Challenges in Accessing Food

67% of current mineworkers reported that the key challenge in accessing food was due to a shortage of money. The remaining reasons were directly related to COVID-19 in that they either: could not access the food due to movement restrictions; there was a shortage of food at the markets or that they were too nervous to go out because of COVID-19. Figure 3 below displays these challenges:

Challenges in Accessing Food

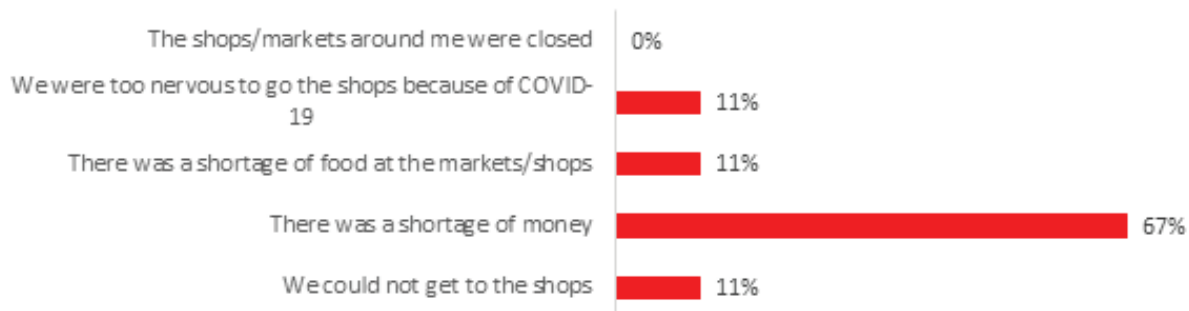


Figure 3: Challenges in Accessing Food

When the current mineworkers were asked about their key challenges in general, the above findings were reinforced with the following quotes:

“Expenditure was high because food intake increased”

“We ate less food than we used to because I was earning partial pay”

An analysis of the above data and correlation with the thematic analysis of the key challenges (see Table 2 below) would suggest that while food security was a challenge due to a shortage of money; this was more related to eating less of the food they preferred than not having enough food or skipping meals. Therefore, while noted, the results are suggestive that this was not a key challenge for this cohort.

2.4 IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Income Changes

95% of the current mineworkers indicated that they had to stop working when the COVID-19 lockdown began. However, over 92% received some form of full or partial pay. The figure below represents these findings from the results:

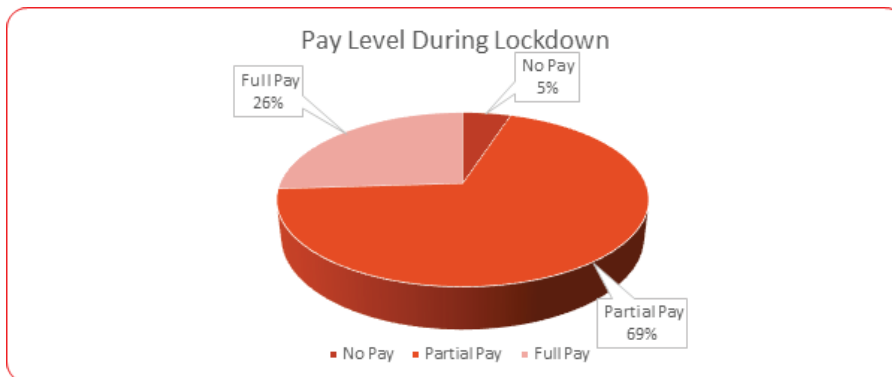
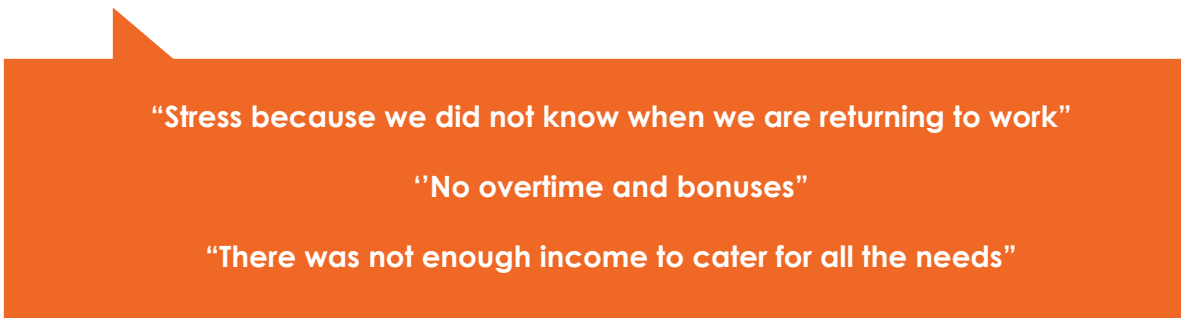


Figure 4: Pay Level During Lockdown for Current Mineworkers

From the comments relating to the key challenges, it was noted that many mineworkers relied on overtime or bonus pay to boost their income and were dissatisfied that this was no longer available. The current mineworkers also reported that finding or creating alternative sources of income was significantly challenged and only 1 person indicated finding an alternative source of income. While the impact of COVID-19 is notable, it was to a lesser extent than many who are employed in the informal economy and particularly the ex-mineworkers.

The following quotes outline some of the concerns from the current mineworkers in relation to their livelihoods:



2.5 IMPACT ON HEALTH

Access to Clinics or Doctors

Over 55% of respondents reported that they did not need to access doctors or clinics over the past 6 months. For those who did need to access healthcare, 30% stated that the challenges were related to movement restrictions. Figure 5 below outlines the current mineworkers' challenges in accessing doctors or clinics:

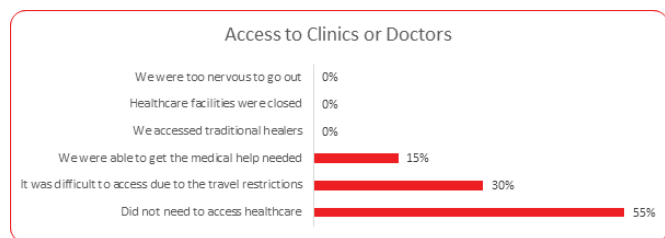


Figure 5: Challenges in Accessing Clinics or Doctors

Access to Medicines

Like the access for current mineworkers to doctors/clinics above, 50% reported that they did not need to access medicines, while 20% were able to get the medicines they needed. For the remainder, challenges in accessing medicines was primarily due to COVID-19 movement restrictions. This is represented in figure 6 below:

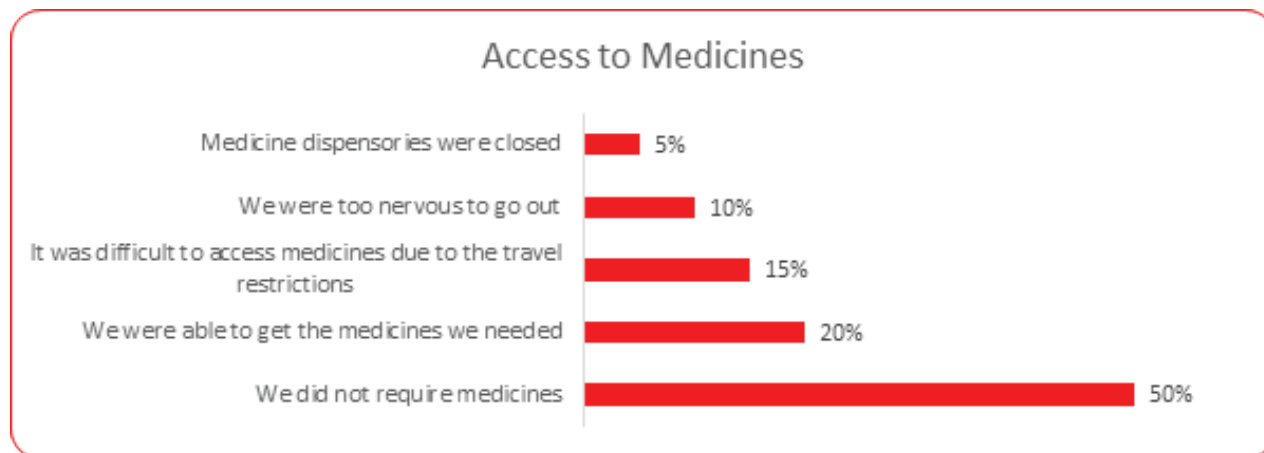


Figure 6: Challenges in Accessing to Medicines

In summary, 90% of respondents reported that there was no deterioration to their health during the past 6 months with the majority not needing to access healthcare for medical professionals or medicines. For those who needed to access doctors, clinics or medicine, the key challenge was due to lockdown travel restrictions. These findings are not surprising as most current mineworkers are under the age of 60 and have access to some form of healthcare at the mines. Anecdotally, while TB is a concern for current mineworkers, there have been significant improvements in terms of the monitoring and treating of TB on the mines within the last 5 years. However, for those with TB and already compromised respiratory systems, COVID-19 could spell disaster. A shortcoming of this survey would have been to ask if the current mineworkers had or had had TB in the past. This would have perhaps highlighted a greater potential for COVID-19 to impact the health of these current mineworkers.

2.6 KEY CHALLENGES

The raw data from the open-ended question on the key challenges experienced by the current mineworkers and their families over the past 6 months, was coded according to the key themes they identified. The table below highlights these key themes and their prevalence:

Key Thematic Area	Count
Financial Challenges	14
Movement Restrictions	7
Disruption to Social Aspects	5
Accessing Health care	3
Not having enough Food	3

Table 2: Challenges Identified by Current Mineworkers: Key Themes and Prevalence

An analysis of the key challenges experienced over the past 6 months by the current mineworkers primarily relates to the impact of the lockdown on working. Financial challenges were the highest response followed by movement restrictions as key themes impacting their livelihoods. This in turn had a ripple effect on their day to day lives and households.

2.7 KEY NEEDS

Current mineworkers were asked in an open-ended question what they and their families felt they needed considering the impact of COVID-19 on their lives. This was coded according to the key themes they identified. The table below displays these themes and their prevalence:

Key Thematic Area	Count
Economic/Livelihood Support	16
Support with Food Security	3
Save more	3
Social Security or Grants	1
Prevent Movement Restrictions	1
Health Related Needs	1
Education	1
Social	1

Table 3: Needs Identified by Current Mineworkers: Key Themes and Prevalence

The current mineworkers identified the importance of keeping the economy going and hence enabling the generation of alternative sources of income. Farming, crop productions, small-scale businesses were a resounding recommendation or key need identified. The quotes below outline some of these needs:

“The economy should be allowed to run fully”

“Starting a small-scale business-like poultry to get some income”

“Finding other means of generating income.....so that we do not only depend on the mine”

In addition to the above, many current mineworkers identified the role that government could play to stimulate the economy and small-scale business development.

3. Discussion Current Mineworkers

A key limitation of this study was the low numbers represented by the current mineworkers and as this cohort was not represented by South African current mineworkers. However, the findings and analysis correlate with the United Nations World Food Programme Survey, which also indicated how COVID-19 had caused widespread disruption to livelihoods, driven primarily by movement restrictions as a result of hard lockdowns like those experienced at the beginning of the pandemic.

Overall for the current mineworkers, the overwhelming majority were supported in terms of an income and the impact on food security and healthcare was certainly felt to a lesser extent than the ex-mineworkers (see Chapter 2 – Ex-Mineworkers). None-the-less this does not diminish the impact which had a ripple effect on them and their families across borders. As the pandemic progresses and resurgences emerge, the impact on the economy and mining industry may have more notable challenges for the current mineworkers in the future.

4. Recommendations for Current Mineworkers

Recommendation 1: Further situational analysis

A survey with a larger sample size which is more representative of the research population is required. This should also compare the 'then and now' 1-year into COVID-19, to get a greater breadth of understanding as time has passed on the impact on livelihoods.

Recommendation 2: Ongoing prevention and containment of the spread of COVID-19 within the mines, providing vaccines as soon as possible

The Mineral Council of South Africa COVID-19 Dashboard (8 January 2021), reports a nearly 4% greater testing rate for COVID-19 for current mineworkers than for the general population in South Africa. This needs to continue to be closely monitored. In addition, continued dialogue between the Minerals Council and Mines must garner assurance that employees have the necessary information, personal protective equipment and robust infection control policies and procedures to support them to continue to work and ensure stable livelihoods. Rigorous controls must be developed and adhered to. Vaccines should be administered as soon as possible and pre and post leave testing should be conducted for these migrant miners.

Recommendation 3: Improved access to financial aid during lockdowns

It is unclear from the survey how many of the current mineworkers were domestic mineworkers or working on mines in South Africa and how many of them returned home. It was highlighted 69% received partial pay during lockdown but many of the mineworkers are often the sole source of income and reduction in pay has catastrophic effects on the entire household. Social protection mechanisms need to be improved to support mineworkers during these times. It is unclear of the impact on Artisanal and Small-Scale mineworkers who were not captured in the survey. Often, they have no access to any social protection such as Unemployment Funds.

Section B: Ex-Mineworkers

5. Results and Analysis Ex-Mineworkers

5.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

The table below outlines the demographics for the 44 respondents from the surveys conducted on the ex-mineworkers.





Total Number	44 Respondents
Gender	32 Male and 12 Female
Average Age Group	60+ years
Country	Botswana = 8 Eswatini = 11 Lesotho = 10 South Africa = 15
Average Household Size	5+ in household

Table 4: Demographics Ex-Mineworkers

5.2 ACCESS TO COVID-19 INFORMATION

Source of Information

The ex-mineworkers were all asked where and how they accessed information about COVID-19. Multiple answers could be selected. Those with the highest profile included the radio/tv/newspaper; family and friends and neighbours. 100% of all ex-mineworkers had received information about COVID-19 and indicated that this had been from multiple sources. The figure below is a dashboard of the sources of information.

  	RADIO TV NEWSPAPER	41%
	FAMILY	25%



	FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS	25%
	INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA	4%
	TEXT ALERTS MOBILE PHONE	5%

Figure 7: Sources of COVID-19 Information Ex-Mineworkers

Awareness of COVID-19

All the ex-mineworkers displayed an excellent awareness of COVID and how it is transmitted. The survey question provided multiple options for the respondent to choose from, some options being incorrect in terms of COVID-19 transmission. However, all the ex-mineworkers selected the correct responses, recognising that this was through a COVID-19 infected person sneezing/coughing/spitting close to you or from touching infected surfaces; to shaking hands with an infected person.

5.3 IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY

Food Situation at Home Over the Past 6 Months

While 50% of both current and ex-mineworkers indicated they ate less of the food they preferred, over 40% of the ex-mineworkers indicate that they skipped meals, ate less than usual or went a whole day or more without eating food. Only 7% indicated they increased their food intake. This is more than 50% less than the current mineworkers for whom 15% ate more. Figure 8 below outlines their responses:



Figure 8: Food Situation at Home over the Past 6 Months for Ex-Mineworkers

Challenges in Accessing Food

69% of ex-mineworkers reported that the key challenge in accessing food was a shortage of money. The remaining reasons were related to COVID-19, with accessing shops being a key challenge. This could however correlate with the fact that most ex-mineworkers live in rural settings. Figure 9 below displays these challenges:



Figure 9: Challenge in Accessing Food for Ex-Mineworkers

The results indicate that food security was a greater concern or impact for the ex-mineworkers than current mineworkers. In addition, the majority (66%) indicated that they did not have stocks of food stored. A clear correlation is drawn to their limited or lack of income over this period and was also cited as a key reason for their reduced access to food; in addition to expressions of limited relief or social protection funds to bolster income. It must therefore be noted that for this cohort their financial challenges are not only linked to COVID-19. For many, lack of pensions and unclaimed social protection and compensation funds also have an impact. The quotes below highlight some of these challenges:

“We could not earn an income, so we struggled to buy food”

“It was not easy to buy food because I do casual labour.....and there was no income”

“My old age grant was inconsistent”

5.4 IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Sources of Income

Approximately 39% of the ex-mineworkers interviewed indicated that they don't have a usual source of income. 50% of the ex-mineworkers indicated that their ability to work or generate an income was affected during the past 6 months. Of those that had an income this was from the following sources:

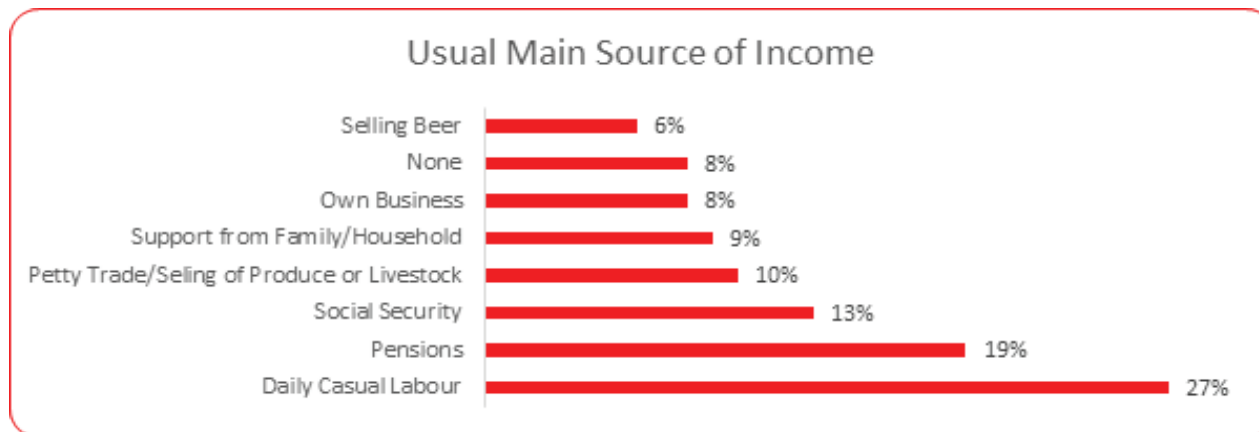


Figure 10: Usual Main Source of Income for Ex-Mineworkers

Most of these sources of income are from the informal economy and 70% of ex-mineworkers indicated a severe impact on income as a result of restrictions due to COVID-19.

The following key reasons for this severe disruption to income are outlined as follows:

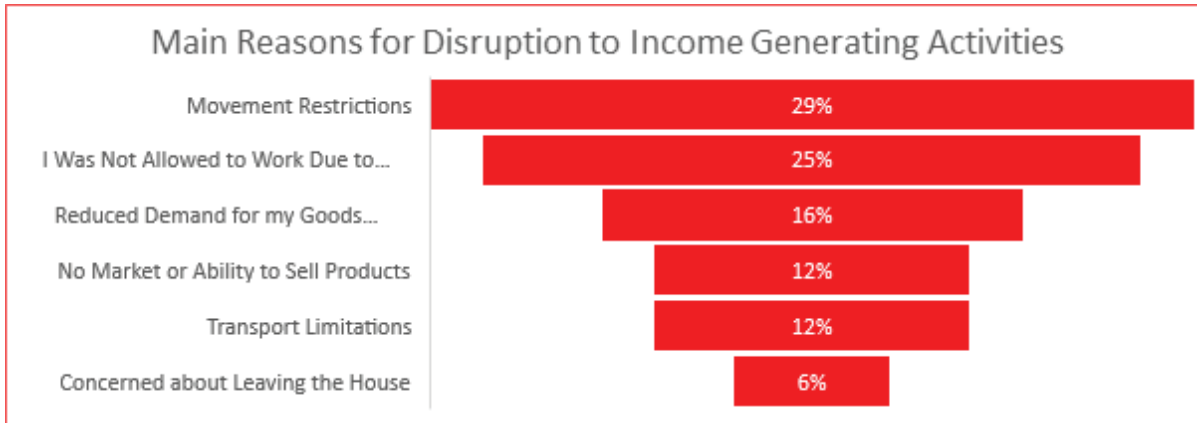


Figure 11: Main Reasons for Disruption to Income Generating Activities

Impact on Access Benefits or Applying for Benefits

For ex-mineworkers who rely on a pension or social security (39% of the ex-mineworker respondents), access to their pensions or social security was impacted due to COVID-19. 35% of these ex-mineworkers indicated that this was impacted all the time, while 59% said that this was only some of the time.

50% of the ex-mineworkers interviewed were in the process of applying for compensation or a benefit. Of these nearly 86% expressed that they had challenges accessing or applying for these benefits due to the following:

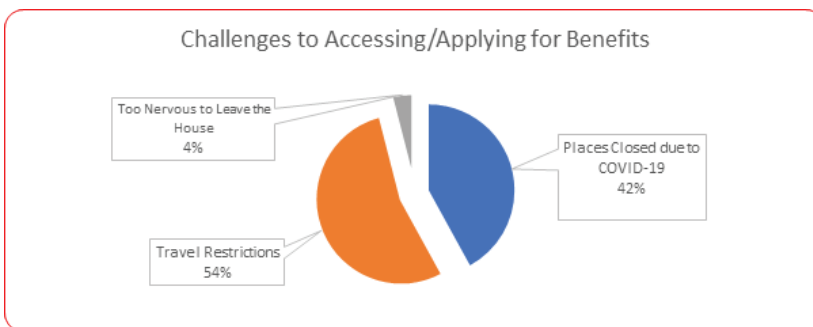


Figure 12: Challenges to Accessing/Applying for Benefits

Overall, the ex-mineworker respondents have felt the impact of COVID-19 on their livelihoods significantly as demonstrated by their quotes:

“My business was not allowed to operate and therefore there was no income at all”

“Could not make any other means to get income because of travel restrictions”

“My income dropped significantly because there was less demand for my vegetables”

5.5 IMPACT ON HEALTH

General Health Status

Of the 44 ex-mineworkers interviewed, predominantly over the age of 60 years, 45% indicated that they had an occupational lung disease. However, 55% indicated that their health did not get worse over the past 6 months. 18% indicated that their health got worse because they could not get to a doctor or access medicines, with 1 respondent indicating he/she was diagnosed with COVID-19. This is represented below:

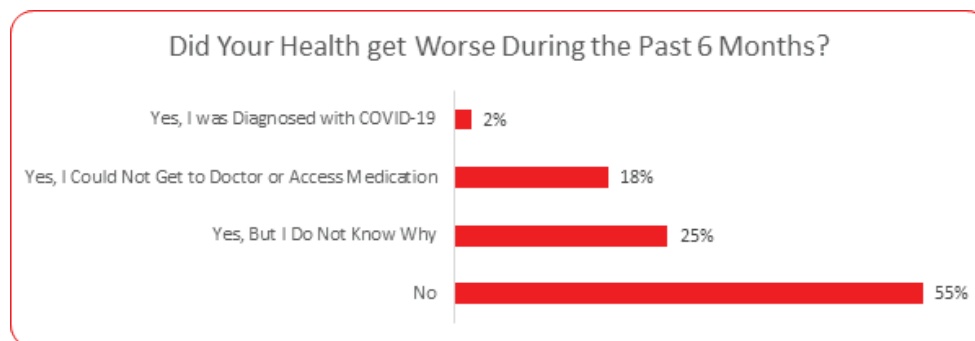


Figure 13: Ex-Mineworker Health Status over Past 6 Month

Nearly 25% indicated that their health deteriorated but were unsure why. This raises a concern given the 45% indicated they had an occupational lung disease. For those who needed to access doctors, clinics or medicine, the key challenge was due to the lock down travel restrictions. On average, only around 24% were able to access clinics/doctors and the medicine they needed. Overall, the ex-mineworker's history of TB and occupational lung disease makes them extremely vulnerable to respiratory related viruses like COVID-19 and every effort needs to be made to ensure they have the right information and are protected.

5.6 KEY CHALLENGES

The raw data from the open-ended question on the key challenges experienced by the ex-mineworkers and their families over the past 6 months, was coded according to the key themes they identified. The table below highlights these key themes and their prevalence:

Key Thematic Area	Count
Financial Challenges	33
Movement Restrictions	23
Not Having Enough Food	20
Disruption to Social Aspects	18
Not having enough Food	17

Table 5: Challenges Identified by Ex-mineworkers: Key Themes and Prevalence

An analysis of the key challenges experienced over the past 6 months by the current mineworkers primarily relate to the impact of the lockdown on working. Financial challenges were highlighted as the greatest challenge followed by movement restrictions then food insecurity.

5.7 KEY NEEDS

Ex-mineworkers were asked in an open-ended question what they and their families felt they needed considering the impact of COVID-19 on their lives. This was coded according to the key themes they identified. The table below displays these themes and their prevalence:

Key Thematic Area	Count
Economic/Livelihood Support	22
Support with Food Security	21
Social Security or Grants	21
Health Related Needs	9
Social	6
Prevent Movement Restrictions	5
Education	1

Table 6: Needs Identified by Ex-Mineworkers: Key Themes and Prevalence

In summary, the key needs identified by the ex-mineworkers can be summarised as follows:

1. Food Security Measures
2. Relief Funds
3. Job opportunities
4. Financial Assistance
5. Social Support

With economic and livelihood support being a key theme and drawing a correlation with the ex-mineworkers sources of income coming from the informal sector; they expressed the importance of ensuring continuity of income as follows:

“If I could get my compensation, I could start a small business/tuck shop to have some income”

“Find a market for the products that could help us regain the loss we went through in the last 6 months”

“Stop closing small businesses because that’s causing a lot of suffering”

6. Discussion Ex-Mineworkers

As mentioned in the discussion under the chapter for the current mineworkers, a key limitation to this assessment has been the small sample size and a more detailed situational analysis may be beneficial in pinpointing key actions to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on mineworkers. None-the-less, it must be noted that many of the challenges and needs identified by the ex-mineworkers through this survey are not new but have been exacerbated by COVID-19. This is deeply concerning for a cohort who were already struggling in terms of their livelihoods, food security and access to healthcare.

For the ex-mineworkers, the resonating theme has been the impact on their livelihoods and the ripple effect this has had. The findings highlight that this cohort predominantly engage in the informal economy through a variety of means. The ex-mineworkers cited that movement restriction; not being allowed to work; reduced demands for their good/services and access to markets to sell their products as key reasons for the disruption to their income. This correlates with the United Nations World Food Programme Survey, which also indicated how COVID-19 had caused widespread disruption to livelihoods, driven primarily by movement restrictions, with half of these respondents indicating negative changes to income, particularly for those engaged in casual labour or petty trade. Data from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on the labour market impact of the COVID-19 pandemic reveals the devastating effect on workers in the informal economy. In the first month of the lockdown, they estimated a 60% drop in the income of informal workers globally (81% in Africa). This impact will continue to be felt even post lockdown.

The ILO calls for urgent, targeted and flexible measures to support workers and businesses, particularly smaller enterprises, those in the informal economy and others who are vulnerable.

“For millions of workers, no income means no food, no security and no future. [...] As the pandemic and the jobs crisis evolve, the need to protect the most vulnerable becomes even more urgent.” Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General

This certainly resonates with the respondents in this rapid assessment and for the ex-mineworkers this is no exception. A joint statement by the ILO, FAO, IFAD and WHO on the impact of COVID-19 on people's livelihoods, their health and our food systems (Oct 2020); acknowledges the social and

economic disruption of this virus to peoples' livelihoods and particularly informal workers who are most vulnerable because the majority lack social protection, access to quality health care and food security. They suggest immediate action on extending social protection towards universal health coverage and income support for those most affected. This includes workers in the informal economy and in poorly protected and low-paid jobs, including youth, older workers, and migrants. They also recommend different forms of support like cash transfers, shelter and food relief initiatives, and financial relief for businesses, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. The ILO SADC COVID-19 Rapid Assessment also highlights the deficits in terms of social protection.

For those who access pensions or social security, about 50% of the ex-mineworkers interviewed were in the process of applying for compensation or a benefit. Of these nearly 86% expressed that they had challenges accessing or applying for these benefits due to movement restrictions or places being closed. This is in addition to the already difficult and challenging processes in accessing compensation or unclaimed benefits, as highlighted in the study on the Building a Cross -sectoral Database for the unlocking of unclaimed benefits. More needs to be done to ease the unlocking of these benefits now.

It was also noted for the ex-mineworkers that more emphasis was placed on the social impact that the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions placed on them and their families than for the current mineworkers. This appeared to be most felt in terms of visiting and supporting family, attending as funerals and other social functions and gatherings. However, this remains a challenge across the globe and at the time of writing this report, a resurgence and new variant of COVID-19 can do little to ease socialisation restrictions.

7. Recommendations for Ex-Mineworkers

Recommendation 1: Further situational analysis required

A more in-depth analysis with a larger sample size that is more representative of the research population is required. This should also compare the 'then and now' 1-year into COVID-19, to get a greater breadth of understanding as time has passed by in this pandemic.

Recommendation 2: Fast-Tracking the Unlocking of Social Protection and Compensation Benefits

Fast tracking the unlocking of social protection benefits and compensation will certainly release resource into communities that are struggling at this time. This is needs to be underpinned by:

- Changes to restrictive and over administrative ODIMWA legislation to ease processing
- Electronic systems for rapid processing
- Continuity of Occupational Health Service Centres in Labour sending countries for processing of benefits and compensation

Recommendation 3: Enabling support for ex-mineworkers through integrated socio-economic development programmes

Co-ordination of international donor aid on stimulus packages and debt relief measures, targeting support to small businesses, particularly those in the informal economy, inclusive of the ex-mineworker population. This must be achieved through a webinar with key stakeholders within the mineworker and ex-mineworker space, and the agreed actions implemented through the ex-mineworker associations.

Recommendation 4: Proactive mobilisation of health care for this key population

This vulnerable group already have compromised lung function and as the COVID-19 is a respiratory disease, anecdotally, we can expect that the mortality of ex-mineworkers who contract COVID-19 will be extreme. As such, the Health System should have an early warning system and track the health of these ex-mine workers. Community health care workers should call or visit and check on them and they should have oxygen therapy available as a resource and be prioritised for oxygen if the need arises. Mines could be approached as part of the CSR to donate oxygen cylinders/ concentrators that would be kept available to these key population.

8. Conclusion

While the impact of COVID-19 was felt by both current and ex-mineworkers, the results of this study highlight that this more so for the ex-mineworker cohort. While the current mineworkers may feel disruptions to their income, they are still employed and have a certain amount of security for their healthcare and livelihoods through the mines (severe lockdowns notwithstanding) and representing bodies. However, this is very different for the ex-mineworker population and previous studies or articles indicate that they are more impoverished, struggle to access social protection and compensation funds and rely more on the informal economy for trade and sources of income. If the ex-mineworker population was struggling before, this will only be exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19. This certainly correlates with the findings of this study and all efforts need to be made to garner a co-ordinated response from international aid and key stakeholders to alleviate the challenges.

Despite limitations to the study, this rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on current and ex-mineworkers clearly highlighted the negative impact of COVID-19 on their health, livelihoods and food security. This was most felt by the ex-mineworker cohort who rely on the informal economy, grants and social protection. This resonated with other similar studies, articles and reports, suggesting that the results and findings of this study are representative of the 2 cohorts surveyed. None-the-less, a more in-depth analysis and representative sample size, looking particularly at livelihoods and comparing this 1-year on since the first lockdown, would be beneficial in gaining a better understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 over an extended period of time.

9. References

- Documentary on the Plight of Ex-mineworkers (2017), Southern Africa Trust: Accessed 6 Oct 2020 <http://www.southernafricatrust.org/documentary-plight-ex-miners-southern-africa/>
- Virus-hit SA Miners battle to Return Workers (June 2020), IOL Business report: Accessed 10 Oct 2020: <https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/economy/virus-hit-sa-miners-battle-to-return-workers-49976993>
- 73 Mineworkers Died of COVID-19 (July 2020), IOL Business Report: Accessed 6 Oct 2020: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/73-mineworkers-died-of-covid-19-80254ece-f387-4785-b457-554e6affea89>
- Impact of COVID-19 on People's Livelihoods their Health and our Food Systems, World Health Organisation: Accessed 28 Dec 2020: <https://www.who.int/news/item/13-10-2020-impact-of-covid-19-on-people's-livelihoods-their-health-and-our-food-systems>
- Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey – Round 1 (April 2020), World Food Programme: Accessed 8 Oct 2020: <https://www.wfp.org/publications/caribbean-covid-19-food-security-livelihoods-impact-survey-round-1>
- Moving to a Post COVID-19 World (September 2020), Cenfri: Accessed 27 December 2020): <https://cenfri.org/articles/moving-to-a-post-covid-19-world/>
- COVID-19: Livelihood and Food Insecurity (April 2020), de Coning, C: Accessed 3 January 2021: <https://www.accord.org.za/analysis/covid-19-livelihood-food-insecurity/>
- As job losses escalate, nearly half of global workforce at risk of losing livelihoods, International Labour Organisation: Accessed 4 January 2021: https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_743036/lang--en/index.htm
- Executive Summary COVID-19 SADC Rapid Impact Assessment (Nov 2020), International Labour Organisation: Accessed 3 January 2021: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-abidjan/---sro-cairo/documents/publication/wcms_763394.pdf
- Minerals Council Position on COVID 19: Accessed 9 January 2021: <https://www.mineralscouncil.org.za/minerals-council-position-on-covid-19>

10. Annexures

Annexure A: COVID 19 Impact Survey: Current Mineworkers and their families.



COVID 19 Impact
Survey Current Miner

Annexure B: COVID 19 Impact Survey: Ex-Mineworkers and their families



COVID 19 Impact
Survey Ex Miner Final.

Annexure C: Fieldworker Scripting for Survey.



Interviewer Scripting
and Consent.docx