

# Government Communication Strategy on COVID-19

28 April 2020



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# Presentation outline

1. Introduction
2. Communication Objectives
3. Journey of communication (phases)
4. Stakeholder engagement sessions
5. Coordination structures
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8. Engaging the media to inform the nation
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13. Beyond our borders
14. Way forward

# INTRODUCTION

- GCIS is mandated to **co-ordinates communication and to ensure dissemination of government information** to the general public.
- The **2020/23 Annual Performance Plans (APP)** of the GCIS had not anticipated that in 2020 would be facing this COVID 19 Pandemic;
- GCIS was mandated **to lead the Communication Work stream** that feeds into the **National Coronavirus Command Council chaired by the President** . The APP of GCIS for the period 2020/2021 financial year therefore will be affected.
- The attached **Covid 19 Communication Strategy** we are sharing will form the bulk of the GCIS work this year. A special additional budget has been submitted to National Treasury.
- We appreciate the fact that **winning the fight to stop the spread of this virus requires an effective communication** and the massive awareness programme without negatively impacting on governance regime of Parliament

# Background



## **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA AS CHIEF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATOR:**

*"...The message of hope, of recovery and of rebirth. We shall recover. We shall overcome. May god bless South Africa and protect her people"*  
President Cyril Ramaphosa

**NATIONAL COMAND COUNCIL**

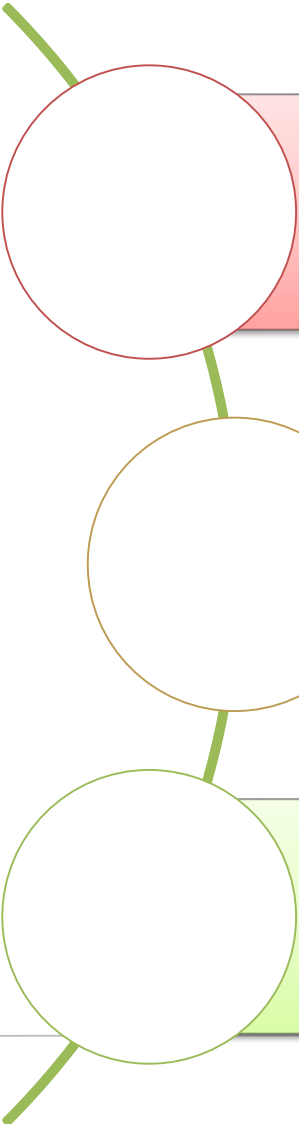
**MINISTER ZWELI MKHIZE**

**MINISTER OF HEALTH**

**The approach is pro-active and reactive in the messaging. GCIS leading the co-ordination**



# Communication Objectives



To create an **awareness and understanding of the COVID-19** disease, symptoms and risks of infection.

To **inform** and educate on the virus and preventative measures

To **inform to empower** society on economic mitigation measures to rally government intervention measures



# Journey of communication

LINKED TO DAILY COMMAND COUNCIL MEETINGS

## PHASE 1

Repatriation of South Africans from Wuhan

Communicate the responsibility of each citizen to sanitize and protect self and others

Stakeholder engagements



## PHASE 2

Communication on the **National State of Disaster**

Communication on the **Lockdown**

Awareness and understanding of complying to **Regulations**

Communication on the **continuation of essential government services**

Communication on **interventions to support vulnerable communities**



## PHASE 3

Inform and educate the public on motivation for the **extension**

Mobilise the nation to support the extension

Ensure **compliance with lockdown provisions**

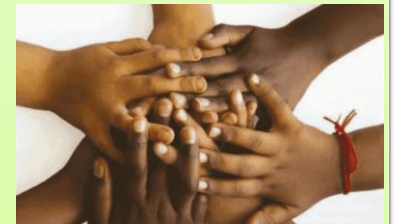
Outline the **socio-economic support**

Communicating the roll-out of **mass health screening**



## PHASE 4

economic recovery plan a path that both saves lives and protects livelihoods.



# Stakeholder Engagement Sessions

Prior confirmation of the first case of COVID-19 in SA, the Government Communication System coordinated **Three Key** sessions with Stakeholders.

The first one was with **Government Communicators** on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2020. The intention was to educate and workshop the National Communication Strategy.

On the 12th March 2020, a session with **Multiple Sectors** was held to engage them on awareness, government plans and to foster communication partnerships. About 75 officials attended the session from Public and Private Sector, Taxi Association, NGO and NPO, Business and Labour and Gender Equality groups.

GCIS in partnership with the NICD implemented **Provincial Roadshow Sessions**. NICD made presentations in most provinces to Provincial Executives and Communicators.

These sessions were effective as they resulted in different sectors communicating official government key messages of personal hygiene on their different platforms (Websites, Packaging, TV adverts, Radio promos, and etc.). We ensured that after each session, we supplied stakeholders with communication tools and products for proper message alignment.

We continue to maintain our relationship with our stakeholders by ensuring that they have access to government communication products which are developed, updated and distributed when available.



# Coordination structures

## COMMUNICATIONS WORKSTREAM OF THE NATJOINTS STRUCTURE

**LEAD DEPARTMENT: GCIS**

**MEMBERS: All Heads of Communication of National Departments**

**Critical departments:** Health, SAPS, Defence, Home Affairs, Justice, Social Development, Tourism, Correctional Services, Transport, Brand South Africa, Trade Industry & Competition, Small Business Development, Women Children & Persons with Disability, International Relations and Cooperation and The Presidency.

**Meetings:** Meetings of the Communication Command Centre convened daily.

**Focus:** Include media analysis, implementation of communication strategy and departmental reports. Convening of the **Government Communicators Forum**

### RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Media monitoring, analysis, research
- Communication strategizing
- Drafting talking points and information products
- Media engagement
- Broadcasting via community radio.
- Videography and Photography
- Community mobilization and outreach
- Information dissemination
- Publishing messages on websites, social media
- Article writing and publications
- Project management and coordination of communication resources





# Integrated Communication Strategy

<b>Media Plan</b>	IMC Briefings; Media Statements; Engagement with SANEF; Media Tour to ORTIA by His Excellency the President – well wishes for the departure to Wuhan; Media Briefings Minister Health and Minister Tourism & Government and Health Spokespersons.
<b>Content Production</b>	Digital Media - Daily infographics; YouTube Video on the departure to Wuhan – Team Leader Mr Bham – SABC flighted already.
<b>Radio scripts</b>	Translated into all official languages and made into adverts and live reads and distributed through mainly community Radio.
<b>Daily messages</b>	PLUS revisions of Qs and As – Translated into all official languages and distributed electronically – government communicators, MLOs, Community and Commercial Media.
<b>Outreach and Community Engagement</b>	Provincial Communicators - commenced with communication around Corona Virus from 28 January 2020; Content - signs & symptoms; Infographics and key messages were shared through the distribution networks for further dissemination, Soundbites, video clips on state of readiness shared with provinces. Information is distributed through Community Radio talk shows, Activations at Malls and Taxi Ranks, street intersections and Door to door in communities; local Social Media awareness and Training of government communicators.
<b>Stakeholder engagements</b>	a number of stakeholders are currently briefing their constituencies/ members and customers through own platforms and channels using Toolkit developed - ACSA at all airports in the country; DOT currently Briefing the transport sector stakeholders - information will soon be at all strategic points including toll gates, DBE guidelines for the Basic Education sector have been developed, shared and cascaded to school level; Private sector - 40 major business, retail and commercial enterprises; SANTACO also briefed through a session hosted by GCIS and they committed to cascade through own platforms.
<b>Advertising Plan</b>	Runs across a suite of media channels and platforms. Value for money from the social responsibility of stakeholders bolstering government communication efforts.



# Developing content and messaging

**INFORMED BY COMMUNICATION RESEARCH WHICH ENSURED TARGETED OVERARCHING THEMES OF MESSAGING AND AVOIDED SHOCK MESSAGING !**

## **16 Sets of messages and talking points developed – key messages translated**

- Generic Novel Coronavirus Talking Points – including various updates
- Repatriation of South Africans from Wuhan City
- Regulations on Lockdown
- Intervention Achievements
- Economic Intervention
- Fake News
- Stockpiling of food
- National Disaster Management



- Responsible Behaviour
- Protective Equipment
- Social Distance in Children
- Social Distance in Informal Settlements
- Alcohol and Cigarettes Ban
- Phased Easing of Lockdown
- Community Health Screening
- Panic Buying

# Engaging the media to inform the nation

- President's announcements
- 8 X Cluster media briefings (Regulations, Security, Social, Economic-related briefings)
- Daily Media briefings led by Minister Jackson Mthembu which now happens virtually.
- Sign language interpretation & African languages used by Ministers
- All the media briefings are directly broadcast to 65 Community radios
- **COMMUNITY RADIO** - Currently flighting on 65 stations, 5 adverts per day. Flighting, Live satellite transmission of the command council briefing made available to community radio stations.
- Actively dealing with and squashing **fake news**
- Alerting and communicating on the need to take responsibility for the information that is shared



Minister in the Presidency **Jackson Mthembu** will be speaking to the following SABC and Community Radio Stations on

## SOUTH AFRICA'S RESPONSE TO COVID 19

Tuesday, 31 March 2020

**TUNE INTO** the following SABC & Community Radio stations tomorrow

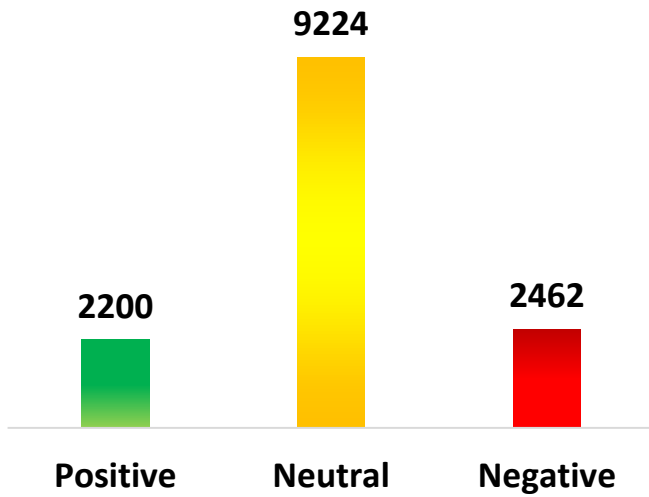
MORNING	EVENING
06:15 - 06:45 iKwekwezi FM (MP)	18:05 - 18:30 Pongolo FM (KZN)
07:50 - 08:00 Tsikaisi Radio (EC)	18:40 - 19:00 Zibonile FM (WC)
08:10 - 08:20 Radio 786 (WC)	19:30 - 20:00 Radio Khwezi (KZN)
08:30 - 09:00 Alex FM (GP)	

Join the conversation [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) @JacksonMthembu @DmaOfficial @Presidency @GovernmentZA



# SENTIMENT ANALYSIS: 23 MARCH – 22 APRIL 2020

## Tone of coverage



- **positive coverage was marred by negative reports on the enforcement of lockdown regulations, police brutality as well as unscrupulous individuals selling and misappropriating the food parcels meant for the poor.**
- **Concerns were also raised about an increase in gender based violence incidents.**

- **There has been massive media coverage on coronavirus (Covid-19) both locally and globally with South Africa and President Cyril prominently mentioned.**
- **The tone of coverage has been mainly factual, with positive sentiments expressed in relation to South Africa's response to the pandemic.**
- The latest announcements of the economic relief initiatives, especially the increase of social grants and grants for the unemployed citizens received the most positive coverage.
- International media noted that South Africa's restrictions (lockdown) have succeeded in reducing the country's average daily increase of confirmed COVID-19 cases from 42% to about 4% since the lockdown began on March 27 with President Cyril Ramaphosa quoted extensively.
- The announcement that the President, Deputy President and cabinet ministers will all take a one-third salary cut for the next three months was also noted and commended
- Police minister Bheki Cele was quoted saving a ban

# Products & Platforms

- Social and online media
- Artificial intelligence scanning the social media and generating questions & answers
- Outdoor advertising
- Digital screens
- Billboards
- Leaflets
- Radio adverts
- Video advert and strips

*Click for Outdoor digital screen*



Click on speaker



## ***Banner / billboard***



- Public Service Announcements
- 30% spend and more on Community Media
- TV advert went live 21 April
- Squeeze backs and news clocks
- Material translated into official languages including Kwe-Kwe and Xun.



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

WHATSAPP SUPPORT  
0600 123 456  
EMERGENCY NUMBER  
0800 029 999  
sacoronavirus.co.za



# Products and Platforms

**GCIS has been instrumental in mobilising and informing citizens through unmediated communication and partnerships with local stakeholders**

- GCIS Provincial Directors form part of core teams which support to Provincial Command Councils.
- Media briefings, outreaches and media statement, radio announcements
- Popularizing of the testing and screening campaign as well as amendment of regulations.



**Community radio programmes – engaging with the public for awareness and education**

Health • Rural Development • Employment • Safety & Security • Education

## Vuk'uzenzele

Produced by Government Communication & Information System (GCIS) April 2020 (Issue 1)



### Stay at home, save South Africa!



CONTACT US: Website: www.gcis.gov.za Email: vukuzenzele@gcis.gov.za Telephone: 011 237 12 479 (toll-free) 011 237 12 479 (toll-free) 011 237 12 479 (toll-free)

# Products & Platforms

## ECONOMIC RELIEF MEASURES

### SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES



Department of Small Business Development measures to assist SMMEs include **SMME Debt Finance Relief** - for those directly or indirectly affected - and **SMME Business Growth Resilience Facility** - for those geared to take advantage of supply opportunities, or shortages of goods in markets. To apply for either:

- Register on <https://smmesa.gov.za>;
- Complete the online Application Form;
- Upload required Supporting Documents.

Visit: [www.dsbd.gov.za](http://www.dsbd.gov.za) for qualifying criteria.

WHATSAPP SUPPORT  
0600 123 456  
EMERGENCY NUMBER  
0800 029 999  
[sacoronavirus.co.za](http://sacoronavirus.co.za)



## SOCIAL RELIEF OF DISTRESS INFORMATION



### WHO CAN CLAIM FOR SOCIAL RELIEF OF DISTRESS?

- Households without a source of income.
- Child headed households.
- A family can apply for assistance within 12 months of the death of the family's sole breadwinner.
- Relief in the form of food parcels will be provided to households where all breadwinners are unemployed.
- People in communities affected by disasters as defined by the Disaster Management Act, 1978 (fire, flood etc).
- If you have been unable to work due to a medical condition.
- Recipients of temporary disability grants that lapsed in March 2020.
- Those who live at home and are existing clients of community nutrition development centres (soup kitchens).
- You can apply if you earn less than R850.
- Grant recipients are not allowed to apply for assistance.
- Caregivers receiving child support for more than one child are precluded from receiving assistance.

TOLL FREE HOTLINE  
0800 601 011



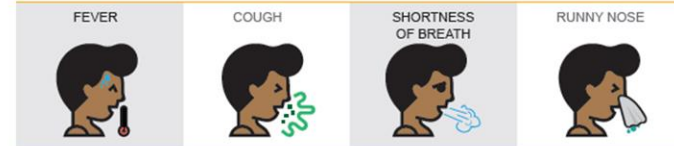
## Sanitise and protect self and others



### COVID-19 OR CORONAVIRUS

The coronavirus comes from a family of viruses that cause breathing and lung problems, the symptoms are similar to the flu and common cold. COVID-19 has spread all over the world. It kills many of those infected and is deadly. All South Africans must monitor their health closely.

### SYMPTOMS ARE



### IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS

CALL THE COVID-19 HOTLINE  
0800 029 999

### PROTECT YOURSELF FROM CORONAVIRUS



### SAVE YOUR LIFE AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS

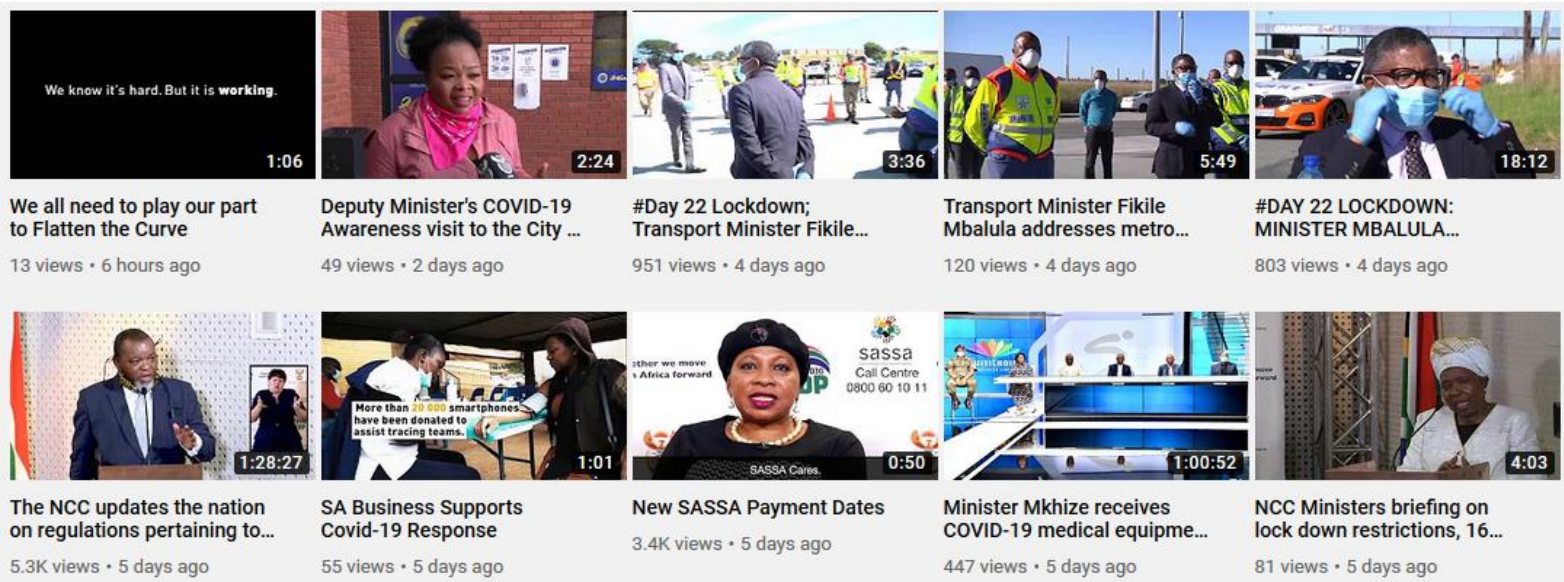
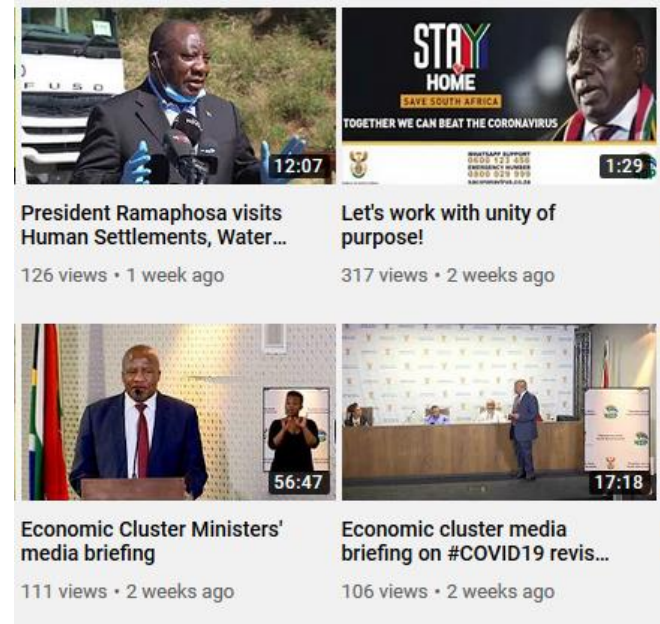
WHATSAPP SUPPORT  
0600 123 456  
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0800 029 999  
[sacoronavirus.co.za](http://sacoronavirus.co.za)



# Products and Platforms

## Video products developed, shared for use by Social Media and broadcasters

- Animations covering lockdown messages
- Various vox pops of messages from essential workers and citizens
- President's addresses to the nation
- Ministerial briefings providing updates
- Recording educational messages
- Critical videos translated into official languages
- Subtitles for hearing impaired





# Providing a government news service

## Articles published

Number of stories published by SAnews focusing on COVID-19 lockdown:

Total since 1 March – 16 April 2020: **497 stories**

## Most read stories

- SASSA provides food parcel relief – **53 607 views**. SASSA pays April 2020 grants earlier – **48 848 views**
- CIPC to grant essential service business operations approval – **37 830 views**
- New COVID-19 Regulations for Funerals – **29 706 views**
- Solidarity Fund – **28 844 views**

## Website statistics

From 1 March to 16 April [www.SAnews.gov.za](http://www.SAnews.gov.za) had **971 583 Users** and **1,663,310 Page Views**

**Twitter: 248 500 followers** as of 16 April 2020

The screenshot shows the SAnews.gov.za website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'HOME', 'NEWS', 'FEATURES', 'MULTIMEDIA', 'GALLERIES', 'OPINIONS', and 'SPECIAL FEATURES'. The main content area is divided into sections: 'Flattening the curve' (with a photo of Minister Mkhize), 'Earlier News' (with several short articles), and a 'Twitter' feed on the right. The Twitter feed shows a tweet from @SAnews about the Eastern Cape's efforts to boost hospital capacity during the lockdown.

# Faster communication through social media

The official Government Twitter account is actively being used to educate and inform the nation on all issues related to the coronavirus in South Africa.

**38,6 Million** screens reached

**71 000** New followers

**1 227** messages shared

**South African Government** @GovernmentZA · 6h  
#Day26ofLockdown Support for businesses: The Department of Small Business Development has allocated R500 million to assist SMMEs whose operations are affected by COVID-19. For more information on how to get assistance, visit: [gov.za/Coronavirus/si...](http://gov.za/Coronavirus/si...) #CoronavirusinSA

**TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT THE CORONAVIRUS**  
2/3  
R200m for SMMEs in the tourism and hospitality sector from the Department of Tourism.  
R500m for SMMEs in the Department of Small Business Development.

**South African Government** @GovernmentZA · Apr 20  
[From the desk of the President ] As government we will this week be providing information on the direct interventions we are taking to shield our most vulnerable citizens from the grim prospect of starvation. [gov.za/blog/desk-pres...](http://gov.za/blog/desk-pres...)

#Covid19inSA #Day26ofLockdown

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

**STAY HOME**  
SAVE SOUTH AFRICA

TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT THE CORONAVIRUS

WHATSAPP SUPPORT 0800 123 436  
EMERGENCY NUMBER 0800 029 999  
[sacoronavirus.co.za](http://sacoronavirus.co.za)

**South African Government** @GovernmentZA  
The official South African Government account, offering easy access to public information and services. Tel: 012 473 0000  
South Africa [gov.za](http://gov.za) Joined June 2013  
486 Following 376.9K Followers

**South African Government** @GovernmentZA · Apr 16  
Today is #Day21ofLockdown and this morning we're challenging you to get out of bed, watch the sunrise and try a slower phone-free day.

**DAY 21** Watch the sunrise and try a slower phone-free day!  
Take the 21-Day Challenge! Follow us for a daily fun challenge, do it and SHARE the pic with SA.  
TAG a friend to challenge. StayHomeSA

**South African Government** @GovernmentZA · 10h  
To ensure that rights and concerns of co-holders of parental responsibilities are considered, please take note of the amendments in relation to the movements of children during the lockdown [gov.za/speeches/minis...](http://gov.za/speeches/minis...) #Covid19inSA #StayHomeSA

**SA LOCKDOWN REGULATIONS**  
AMENDMENTS IN RELATION TO THE MOVEMENT OF CHILDREN DURING LOCKDOWN

**South African Government** @GovernmentZA · Apr 18  
Avuxeni Afrika Dzonga, It's #day23oflockdown | Tshama Ekaya, Ponisa Afrika Dzonga #StayAtHome #SaveSA

**TSHAMA EKAYA**  
PONISA AFRIKA-DZONGA

**South African Government** @GovernmentZA · Apr 14  
[Photos] Arrival of Medical Supplies last night at @ortambo\_int airport donated by the People's Republic of China to South Africa to help with the fight of #Covid19inSA epidemic #Day19ofLockdown



# Faster communication through social media

The official Government Facebook account is actively being used to educate and inform the nation on all issues related to the coronavirus in South Africa.

**38 Million** screens reached

**140 000** New followers

South African Government  
 April 17 at 1:04 PM · 🌐

#Day22OfLockdown  
 We all need to play our part to #FlattenTheCurve. Let's continue to protect each other.  
 #StayHomeSA #Covid\_19



South African Government  
 55 mins · 🌐

#Day26ofLockdown | The confirmed number of #COVID19SA cases stands at 3 465 today with a total number of 126 937 tests conducted to date of which 5 427 were done in the last 24 hours.



South African Government  
 9 hrs · 🌐

South Africans are encouraged to contact SASSA call centre or their provincial offices to apply for Social Relief of Distress. #LockdownSA #Covid19inSA #StayHomeSA

**ECONOMIC RELIEF MEASURES**  
 SUPPORT FOR WORKERS AND INDIVIDUALS

sassa

**SOCIAL RELIEF OF DISTRESS**  
 Applications should be made by either calling 0800 029 999 or by sending an email to [sassa@sa.gov.za](mailto:sassa@sa.gov.za)

**Regional SASSA call centres (0800 029 999)**

Eastern Cape	021 797 0200	Lincoln	011 291 7000
Free State	011 433 6000	Mpumalanga	011 264 7000
Gauteng	011 666 6000	Northern Cape	021 526 7000
KwaZulu-Natal	031 664 4000	North West	021 297 2000
Western Cape	021 461 1914	Western Cape	021 467 9000

WhatsApp Support: 0800 123 456 | Email: [sacoronavirus@sa.gov.za](mailto:sacoronavirus@sa.gov.za)



# Mobilising and informing citizens

Community &  
Stakeholder Liaison  
visits

Strategic Liaison  
Service

**PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL KEY ACTIVITIES**

Development  
Communication  
Outreach  
campaigns

Thusong Service  
Centre programme



# Snapshot of ground work

## CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

- **11** editions of My District Today Newsletter developed.
- **52** Government News bulletin developed

## COMMUNITY ACTIVATIONS

- **34** undertaken  
These include Taxi (**12**), Roadside intersection (**11**), Mall and School (**11**)

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- **9** undertaken  
These include support to the Presidency, Ministers, MECs and Mayors.

## Social media

- Approximately **30 000** people follow the Provincial and Local Liaison (PLL) social media pages.
- Intensified posting on Facebook and Tweeter on Developed and provided COVID-19 information such as infographics, Media Statements, Provincial and District Executive programmes and outreaches.

## DISSEMINATION

- **1 994 400** COVID-19 leaflets received from Royal Bhaca Projects in three separate deliveries, a company contracted by Department of Health.
- **27071** of these leaflets and **250** booklets were distributed by GCIS provincial office and mainly used during Community Taxi Rank and roadside Activations, used at Thusong Marketing programmes, and during Community Stakeholder liaison visits.
- There rest of the leaflets were shared with National Departments such Health (**168 000**), COGTA (**2400**), Transport (**48 000**), DHET (**4800**), SAPS (**508 800**), Department of Social Development for SASSA Pay points (**393 600**) and SANDF (**134 400**)
- Undertook Online dissemination of infographics, media statements, radio scripts, recorded audio messages, announcements and Ministerial video-clips, GCIS Government News bulletin and My District Today newsletter.

## COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

- **7** undertaken

## COMMUNITY MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

- **41** undertaken, **39** were radio programmes and **2** Community TV.



# Ground work ... in pictures

Leveraging on Stakeholder partnership, GCIS was able to profile such below district activities on online platforms and social media.



Food parcels donated by Khumani Mine in John Taolo Gaetsewe district.



Food parcels donated by Khumani Mine in John Taolo Gaetsewe district.



SAPS, SANDF and other law enforcement agencies leading off the street campaign in Alex earlier today (Source Alex FM), they used loudhailing and the siren system on their vehicles to communicate Covid 19 messages(Stay home)



Amathole District Municipality handing over 15 installed water tanks to Ward 13,14,18,19,20,21.



Community radio awareness programme on corona virus at The Voice of Matatiele, GCIS RCC Ndyebo Kopo, Ms Thembisa Manciya from Alfred Nzo District Municipality Municipal Health Service supporting Dr Bayeni from Department of Health who is connected online.



Volunteer from Outsurance and the church of scientology sanitizing Vanderbijlpark taxi rank.



# Ground work ... in pictures



Emfuleni Local Municipality Mayor Cllr Gift Moerane sanitising one of the taxis.



District Mayor TS Mkhombo together with Big 5 Hlabisa & OSS are in Hlabisa to enforcing lockdown regulations and conducting screening and testing. Red cross partnered on the days' program. The program will continue further to Mtubatuba and end up in Makhasa under Big 5 Hlabisa



Minister Mkhize engaging traditional leaders on the status and progress of government's response programme to the COVID-19 pandemic. Courtesy of Sinxolo Gqala - GCIS EC



Mass Screening and Testing taking place at Danville in Mahikeng. Premier of NW Job Mokgoro, MEC of Health Madoda Sambatha and Mayor Betty Diakanyo were present, encouraging community members to adhere Lockdown Regulations.



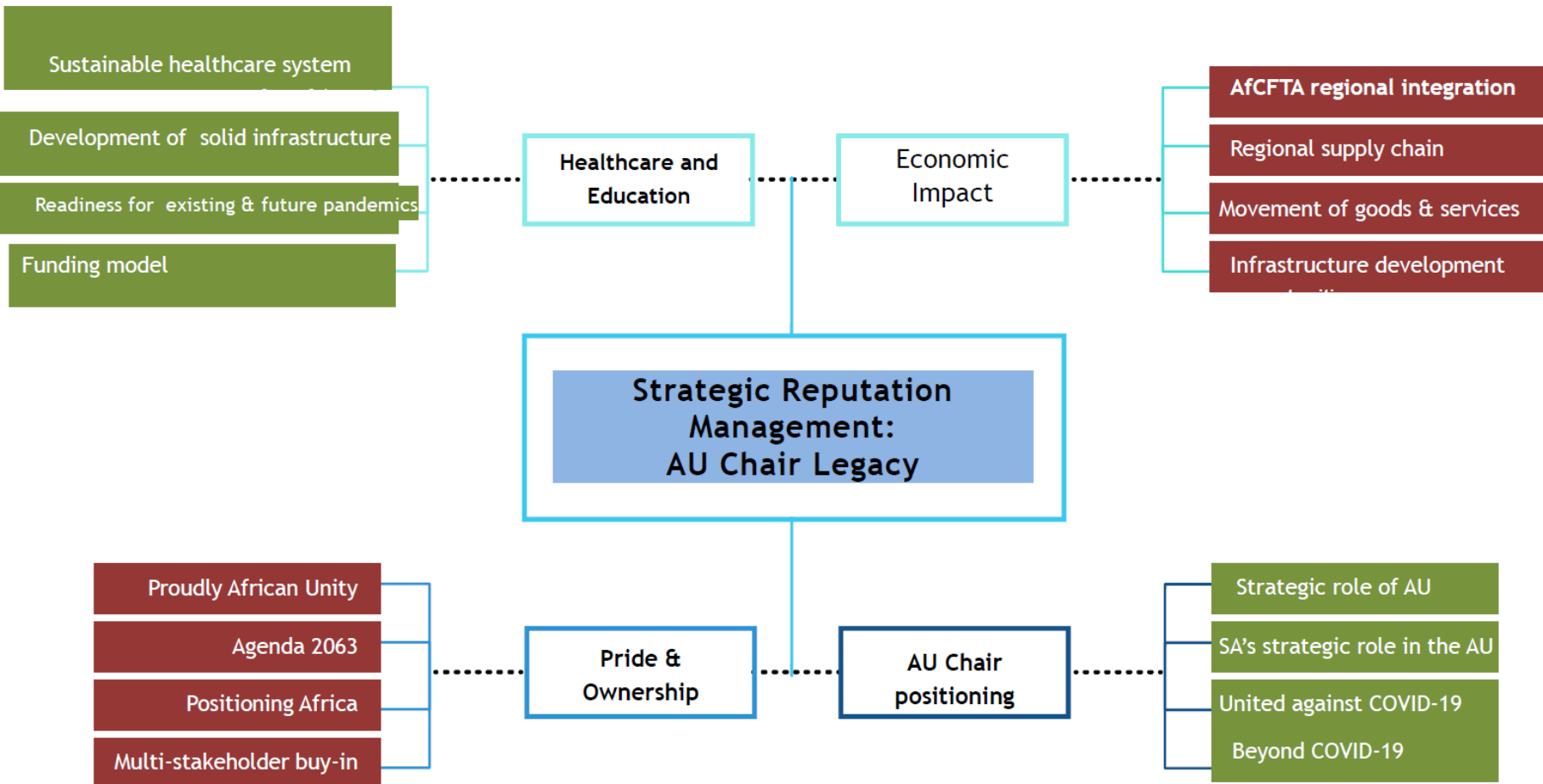
GCIS EC Office in partnership, DEAFSA and Rise N Shine Magazine for people living with disabilities conducting a door to door and awareness activation on COVID - 19 targeting the disability sector. There were also household visits made at Ducats and Mooiplass informal settlements to distribute sanitizers masks and gloves to homes of people living with disabilities.



# Beyond our borders



**Brand SA - Extension of domestic campaign to continent**





# Way forward

## COMMUNICATION REMAINS CRITICAL IN OUR FIGHT AGAINST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- Consistent co ordination and alignment of government messages
- Government communication will continue to adapt to emerging developments
- Ongoing partnerships and stakeholder engagements to double and triple our efforts with limited resources
- MPs to partner with government and Play Your Part by sharing the messaging and information products published on the Coronavirus webpage via [www.gov.za](http://www.gov.za) to inform your constituencies



**SAVE SOUTH AFRICA**

**TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT THE CORONAVIRUS**

# THANK YOU

- End -



**government  
communications**

Department:  
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**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

