



# COVID-19 Situation Report No. 3

## Highlights

As of 30 June, Lao PDR has 19 confirmed COVID-19 cases (last reported 12 April) and zero deaths, with all 19 patients now recovered (MoH).

The UN Country Team (UNCT) continues to provide support to the Government of Lao PDR to strengthen its preparedness against the next COVID-19 outbreak across a range of sectors, including health, migration, education, nutrition, and food security, agriculture, labour, and social services and protection.

The Point of Entry and Provincial Health Facility Strengthening Project under the UN Secretary-General's Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) held a kick-off meeting on 11 June with multiple Government stakeholders and UN Partners. The Project has now piloted the rapid needs assessments for Quarantine Centers and identified target communities in consultation with the Government.

## Reporting Period: 1 – 30 June 2020

### Situation in Numbers (as of 30 June)

	# of confirmed cases	<b>19</b>
	# of deaths	<b>0</b>
	# of return migrants into the country	<b>200,000</b> <small>(National COVID-19 Taskforce)</small>
	# of people tested	<b>17,713</b>
	# of active Quarantine Centers	<b>89</b>

MPI has requested the UN to convene a joint Taskforce to undertake an impact assessment of the COVID-19 outbreak with the objective of identifying policy options against the backdrop of COVID-19 outlining recommendations for the Government in recalibrating the draft 9<sup>th</sup> NSEDP. The Terms of Reference for a Joint Taskforce has been finalized following an inception meeting in late June, and preparation is now underway for more detailed thematic discussions.

Procurement of medical supplies and health products remains a high priority for the Government, particularly in preparing Provincial and District health care facilities in the event of further COVID-19 outbreaks and future epidemics.

The UN has been engaging Lao residents in risk communication and preventative messaging, working with Partners from multiple sectors (Government, religious and faith-based groups, INGOs and local CSOs, educational institutions, media, and private sector). Partnership with Lao Buddhist Fellowship has been expanded, and a risk communication workshop for 200 monks from Vientiane Temples is under preparation. Media workshops have been held on: (1) community mobilization in case of detection of new cases; and (2) upon the completion of the Back To School Campaign. Distribution of information, education and communication (IEC) materials and targeted communication to migrants, children, parents and teachers, youth, women and other vulnerable groups is ongoing.

With all schools, colleges, and universities being instructed to resume classes in June, the Back to School Campaign has been officially completed. To further support continuity of learning, home learning materials developed with UN support are airing on TV and online platforms by MoES, reaching an estimated 72% of the population.

In June, 364 callers were provided with psycho-social support across 17 hotlines created in partnership with the Lao Women's Union (LWU), Lao Youth Union (LYU), and Vientiane Youth Centre to respond to the increase in protection and gender-based violence (GBV) issues.

To support the Government in responding to the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis, the UN is undertaking a range of assessments in the economic and financial sectors, determining the implications on the low-income earning households and vulnerable groups. The UNCT Partners are also improving vulnerability mapping and spatial analysis, identifying high-risk regions across the country. The assessments will also assist in determining





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the impact against the SDGs and what development of policy options and measures will be required in the recovery process.

Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Lao PDR have been mobilized to produce needed personal protective equipment (PPE), in collaboration with MoIC and LNCCI for the sustainability of essential protection supplies.

24 youth volunteers from the LYU, Vientiane Youth Centre and the National University of Lao PDR underwent a three-day training as part of the “Me, My Body, My Planet, My Future” Campaign launched in 2019, learning important leadership skills to drive action in mitigating the negative impact of COVID-19 on adolescents and young people.

### Funding Overview and Partnerships

To meet the growing needs of children impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF has expanded its Humanitarian Action for Children global appeal to US\$1.6 billion. As part of that appeal, the UNICEF Lao PDR COVID-19 Response Plan budget totals US\$10.6 million. So far, a total of US\$3.1 million has been received from various donors, including the EU and World Bank, DFAT, Government of Japan, Government of Ireland, SIDA, and USAID. Approximately 20% of the existing programme was repurposed for COVID-19 response.

MAF, in partnership with FAO and WFP, has developed a US\$12 million Food Security and Nutrition Response Plan to COVID-19, following a rapid food security assessment and Government consultation workshop in June. The immediate recommendations include the provision of critical humanitarian food, livelihood and nutrition assistance to vulnerable groups, enable markets to remain operational (declare as an essential service), expand real-time food security monitoring systems, ensure food security data is incorporated into social protection programmes.

The MPTF Secretariat has confirmed that funding can be earmarked for specific countries, enabling the Development Partners to rapidly commit funds to assist COVID-19 joint programming initiatives.

### Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Lao PDR has contained the COVID-19 outbreak to 19 cases to date. All cases are either travel-related or linked to those.

Migrant and mobile populations bear a high risk of infection as well as broader social and economic impacts of COVID-19 due to several factors and barriers such as lack or inadequate access to proper information on prevention; limitations in or exclusions from accessing diagnostic and treatment services; cramped and crowded living and working conditions; stigma and discrimination; and other factors.

All Lao children have been affected by school closures since 19 March totalling 1,440,733 (52% girls) aged 3-17. All students have returned to school in June, and the Back to School Campaign has been completed.

The total reported cases of dengue fever from January until 30 June was 2,253 cases. 17 Provinces across the country now have reported dengue fever cases. Vientiane Capital has the highest number of cases with 514 cases, followed by 305 cases in Vientiane Province, 263 cases in Bolikhamxay, and 230 cases in Attapeu. There are seven confirmed deaths (03 in Vientiane Capital, 02 in Bolikhamxay, 01 in Khammouan, and 01 in Sayaboury).

The imports and exports of Lao PDR in June achieved US\$757 million, including US\$337 million of export and approximately US\$ 419 million of import; therefore, the trade deficit was US\$82 million. The main export products included copper ore and copper products, banana, wood pulp and paper scraps, frame and camera parts, beverages (water, carbonated water, energy drinks, etc.), mix gold, gold bars, clothes, electric devices and equipment and coffee ([Lao PDR Trade Portal](#)).





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The Lao Economic Monitor rapid assessment of the COVID-19 impact on Lao PDR's growth and debt projects Lao PDR's economic growth in 2020 to range between negative 1.8 and 1%. A sharp drop in the performance of the travel, tourism, and hospitality sectors – which account for 11% of total employment and 22% of employment in urban areas – has caused widespread job losses. Between 96,000 and 214,000 additional people are projected to fall into poverty as a result of the pandemic. The Monitor also shows that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will increase the fiscal deficit in 2020 to between 7.5 and 8.8% of GDP, from 5.1% of GDP in 2019. Consequently, debt levels are expected to increase to between 65 and 68% of GDP in 2020, from 59% of GDP in 2019, which will generate higher debt service obligations.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response



### UN LEADERSHIP, COORDINATION AND STRATEGY

The UN Sustainable Development Group globally developed the [Framework for the Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19](#), which sets out the framework for the United Nations' urgent support to countries and societies in the face of the pandemic, putting in practice the [UN Secretary-General's Shared Responsibility, Global Solidarity report](#). It calls for protecting jobs, businesses and livelihoods and to set in motion a safe, sustainable, gender-equal, and carbon-neutral path to recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

With the rapidly changing socio-economic situation, a recalibration of the 9<sup>th</sup> NSEDP is necessary, including understanding how the three criteria outlined for LDC graduation, i.e., per capita gross national income (GNI), the human assets index (HAI), and the economic vulnerability index (EVI) may be shifting. The UNCT, together with the World Bank and ADB, and other key stakeholders, has been supporting MPI and key Ministries across the sectors in undertaking an impact evaluation of the COVID-19 with the objective to identify policy recommendations and actions for the Government aimed at the recalibration of the draft NSEDP.

The UNCT is supporting the Government-led response to COVID-19, highlighting the need for strong coordination and a multi-sectoral approach. To assist in the wider coordination efforts with national and international Partners, the UNCT has been formulating a country-level Socio-Economic Response Plan to meet the immediate response needs and early recovery programming: (1) Health First: Protecting Health Services and Systems during the Crisis; (2) Protecting People: Social Protection and Basic Services; (3) Economic Response and Recovery: Protecting Jobs, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, and Informal Sector Workers; (4) Education; (5) Macroeconomic Response and Multilateral Cooperation.

18 video-conferencing sets are being procured for Department of International Cooperation under MPI, which plays a vital role in COVID-19 response to ensure its business continuity at the Central and Provincial levels.



### HEALTH

The COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan is expected to be shared with the Development Partners during the summer. This will identify operational priorities for the period up to the end of 2021 and the funding needed to support them.

Training is ongoing in all Provinces to strengthen the capacity of the Provincial Emergency Operations Centres (EOC). The training includes assessments of the EOC facilities to improve the infrastructure and information, communication, technology (ICT) to improve the communication and coordination between Provinces to the District level and up to Central level to manage the COVID-19 response throughout the country. Provincial and District health





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staff will be trained in community engagement for event detection and contact monitoring during July and August. The training was piloted in Vientiane Capital in June and July. A national-level training of trainers for each Province will take place in July.

To ensure that health facilities are equipped to meet the case management demands that a COVID-19 outbreak presents, the UNCT continues to assist MoH in procuring the required medical equipment and PPE. Supplies of medical and laboratory equipment have been arriving in Lao PDR during June. More are expected to arrive in July.

The MoH Clinical Management Guidelines were revised in May and again in late June. Emergency simulation exercises and trainings in infection prevention and control measures, including appropriate use of PPE, screening, triage, and treatment of COVID-19 patients and hospital preparation (including surge capacity for healthcare facilities, human resources for health and logistics management) for COVID-19 have been completed across the 17 Provinces with nearly 200 staff receiving training. Hospital preparedness tools have been implemented during the training, working with health facilities to assess their current capacity and conduct local planning for surge management. Further, there has been continued support to strengthen surveillance, including Provincial Rapid Response Team (RRT) deployment.

MoH has developed guidance on preventive measures for COVID-19 in various settings such as schools, restaurants, public transport, and shops and disseminated it to relevant sectors.

Successfully adapting to the “new normal” of COVID-19 is too big and too complex for the health sector to do it all on its own and will require a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. The UNCT has therefore supported engagement between MoH and the Central Buddhist Fellowship. There are plans to hold a COVID-19 Orientation Meeting for 200 head monks from Vientiane Capital to discuss cooperation on encouraging COVID-19 prevention, calming fears, and combatting stigma.

Guidelines were developed to support midwives in providing maternal health services in the community through outreach and home visits. The COVID-19 Guidance for Maternity Services is being translated into Lao languages. MoH was supported in data collection of pregnant women, children, and adolescents in communities, including those in temporary Quarantine Centers, with 36,400 women of reproductive age and 12 pregnant women identified at the Quarantine Centres. Specific support for pregnant female migrants in quarantine and under surveillance has been strengthened.

The UNCT Partners are providing technical and financial support to national CSO Partners in coordination with MoH to adapt HIV services for people living with HIV/AIDS during the COVID-19 pandemic. Initial COVID-19 information has been shared with key populations, whilst an operations manual for the home delivery of medication and improving access to telehealth consultations is currently being finalized.

MoH has launched a mobile application called “Noi Yakhoo” to provide basic sexual and reproductive health information to adolescents and young people and to develop referral linkages with adolescent helplines for in-depth information as part of innovative approaches to reach out to target groups, specifically in the context of COVID-19. Around 400 adolescents and young people accessed sexual and reproductive health information from the Noi-Yakhoo mobile application in June.



### POPULATION AND PROTECTION

The UN Population and Protection Sub-Group focuses on three levels of protection, at the border, in Quarantine Centers, and for vulnerable groups. This includes comprehensive protection (PPE, supplies, mental health, and psycho-social support as well as protection of rights) for frontline workers, migrants, and vulnerable groups, including women and youth.

Lao migrants returning from neighbouring countries were provided IEC materials on basic hygiene practices, precautions, employment information, and national regulations (500 copies at border checkpoints, 3,550 copies at





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Quarantine Centres). Data collection tools were adapted to better understand the origin and destination of migrants, at the Friendship Bridge and in Vientiane Capital. UN Partners supported MoLSW with developing a rapid assessment of returned migrant workers, which is being conducted by the Skills Development and Employment Department (SDED) under MoLSW across all 17 Provinces and the Vientiane Capital. SDED is analysing data on migrant returnees, currently approaching the conclusion of the second of three rounds of data collection. Direct assistance, including food, water, and sanitary products, is being provided to returnees staying in Quarantine Centres to support their everyday needs and onward journeys. Key informant interviews have been conducted with quarantine management and returning migrants to better understand the gaps in the existing response, enabling UN Partners to better support the Government in assisting vulnerable populations.

Geo-spatial Population Vulnerability Mapping has identified sites with higher population density as well as high levels of returning migrants to focus immediate COVID-19 prevention and response. The results can subsequently be used to improve the decision-making process to efficiently and effectively respond to the outbreak by prioritizing low, medium, and high-risk areas and vulnerability. So far, secondary data has been analysed into four categories: settlements characteristics, migration, healthcare facilities, and socio-economic factors.

As part of the long-term response, technical assistance to the National University of Lao PDR has been launched for reviewing and revising the curriculum of Social Work study programmes in order to better integrate psycho-social support in this curriculum.

LWU Union visited Women's Friendly Spaces are operating in three camps in Attapeu to assess the impact of COVID-19, and to distribute sanitary kits and supplementary food provided by private sector Partners. Based on the findings, the LWU, with support from UN Partners, aims to extend the Women's Friendly Spaces, improving psycho-social support and counselling services, improved sexual and reproductive health services and further consider livelihood skills development initiatives, including fish cultivation, bee farming, household gardens and food processing.

Groups of women who previously made income from production and selling handicraft items for tourists were supported to repurpose their business and started producing reusable cotton masks for sale and distribution to the local communities in Salavan, Houaphanh, Saysomboun, and Vientiane Capital.



### SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT

To mitigate the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 emergency, a number of surveys and rapid assessments have been supported and are at various stages of implementation which will lead to an understanding of: (1) impact of COVID-19 on the economic and financial sectors and on the SDGs (including agriculture and manufacturing industries); (2) studying the implications on the social sectors and on the SDGs, namely: poverty, education, health, social protection (including children, women, migrants, informal workers), protection against violence, exploitation, and abuse; and (3) developing policy options and measures (short, medium and long-term) needed to avoid a further deterioration in the economic and social sectors in the country and support a resilient recovery for Lao PDR.

A consultancy team has been recruited to undertake a socio-economic impact assessment of COVID-19 in Lao PDR. This will incorporate the primary data collection and collate the sector level assessments that have been completed by UN Agencies/Funds/Programmes. The assessment focuses on travel and tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, migration and labour markets, micro and small enterprises (MSEs), and special economic zones and is expected to be completed by the end of July. Preliminary findings reveal that tourism accounts for 14% of the overall economy, and 11% of the workforce already lost 41% of revenue in the first quarter of 2020. The primary data collection was carried out during late June, covering both rural and urban areas in six selected Provinces (Champasak, Savannakhet, Vientiane Capital, Luan Prabang, Oudomxay, and Luang Namtha). Total sample sizes of 350 MSEs and 1200 households from 120 villages were interviewed. Initial survey results show that: women-owned MSEs are impacted more than male-owned businesses in terms of losses (63% female reported a net loss of 40% or more





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compared to 54% males during the first five months of 2020); the impact on female unemployment is significantly larger than male (33% of females vs. 20% of males were found to be out of work); and nearly 99% and 70% of respondents reported that they did not participate in social security programmes, nor health insurance system, respectively.



### MACROECONOMICS

The UNCT is assessing the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy, including on trade, inflation, taxes, value chains, and foreign investment as part of its regular monitoring of the macroeconomic situation. Efforts in response to COVID-19 include working with MoIC, MAF, and LNCCI to assess the impact on the private sector, including undertaking business impact surveys.

The Government, through MPI, has requested UN support in convening a Joint Taskforce to support a determination of the implications of COVID-19 for the development of the 9<sup>th</sup> NSEDP. The inception meeting for the Taskforce has been scheduled for early July and will bring together core members from the Government, including MPI, MoF, OPM and NIER, as well as a small group of relevant Development Partners to agree on priorities and approach. The Taskforce will proceed through a series of detailed thematic discussions bringing in the Government Ministries and external stakeholders as relevant to each session, drawing on the data of the ongoing assessments with a view to making strategic recommendations to MPI and the Sector Working Groups (SWGs) on the possible recalibration of plans and priorities in light of the pandemic whilst ensuring policy coherence across sectors. The work is expected to conclude in August.

An impact assessment of COVID-19 on Lao PDR's economy (trade, inflation, taxes, chains, foreign investments, etc.) is ongoing by MoF, MoIC, MoF, and LNCCI are assessing the impact of COVID-19 on trade and the private sector for Lao PDR with the UN support. These efforts are being supported via a COVID-19 Business Impact Survey and the Tracking of COVID-19 Temporary Trade Measures via the Market Access Map. At the global level, a dedicated [website](#) supporting small businesses through the COVID-19 crisis has been established to share insights and advice. A 15-point Action Plan on supporting small business through the COVID-19 crisis has been published, targeting MSMEs in developing and transition economies that are reliant on international trade flows and are therefore particularly vulnerable to the repercussions of the crisis. A flagship report on the [Great Lockdown and its Effects of Small Business](#) has also been published.



### WASH

Technical advice was provided to Provincial Health Departments on disinfection and water quality. Data is being sought on the needs of Quarantine Centers to facilitate additional disbursement of emergency supplies. The checklist and rapid assessment have been developed by the UNCT with the first assessment to take place at km27 in Vientiane Capital in early July.

Technical advice was provided to MoH and MoES for the development of WASH and risk communication materials for social and mass media broadcasts and print. MoH was supported in incorporating WASH lessons learned from COVID-19 in the sectoral five-year National Social and Economic Development Plan, including health, nutrition, and WASH components.

With the support of key Partners, the National Taskforce for COVID-19, with MoES and MoH, have ensured a safe return to school for Lao students. The MoES Back to School Campaign incorporated "handwashing with soap" and other hygiene messages to ensure that all children return to school safely. Messages and videos addressed teachers, parents, and caregivers to ensure children understand what they can do to protect themselves when in school, such





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as frequent handwashing with soap. 13,149 schools across kindergarten, primary and secondary received IEC materials during the Back to School Campaign.

For the school reopening, an improved learning environment was targeted through a more comprehensive support to children at the school, including WASH facilities and support, as well as health, nutrition, protection, psycho-social, and other support. Construction of WASH facilities was completed in 36 primary and early childhood education (ECE) schools in three Provinces of Xieng Khouang, Salavan, and Attapeu, serving 3,051 school children, among which 1,452 are girls. Schools were supported in ensuring conditions that reduce disease transmission, including access to soap and clean water for safe handwashing, procedures on when staff or students feel unwell, protocols on social distancing, and good hygiene practices.



### FOOD SECURITY, NUTRITION & LIVELIHOODS

In response to the impact on nutrition, MoH (NNC) has developed an Emergency Response Plan for Nutrition to be integrated into the overall MoH Response Plan. This will assist nutrition programme implementation, infant and young child feeding, nutrition awareness and behaviour change messages, the procurement of essential commodities, and repositioning of nutrition supplies.

In coordination with MAF, the Food Security and Agriculture Survey was conducted. A total of 1,007 completed responses from all 17 Provinces and Vientiane Capital were received. Access to food was constrained during the lockdown period, especially for poor households and families reliant on daily labour. The most impacted Provinces include Attapeu, Bokeo, Bolikhamxay, Luang Namtha, Savannakhet, and Saysimbound. A concept for possible responses, including unconditional and conditional food/cash transfers, as well as the possible procurement of specialized nutritious food, complemented by community-level activities, has been developed and shared with the Development Partners.

MAF completed a rapid assessment on the impacts of COVID-19 on food security and agriculture and has prepared a Response Plan outlining immediate, short and medium-term interventions, following a Government consultation workshop in June. The immediate recommendations include the provision of critical humanitarian food, livelihood and nutrition assistance to vulnerable groups, enable markets to remain operational (declare as an essential service), expand real-time food security monitoring systems, ensure food security data is incorporated into social protection programmes.

The Department of Communicable Diseases Control within MoH officially requested the UNCT to support the food needs of returning migrant laborers with a focus on the Quarantine Centers in Savannakhet and Sayaboury Provinces. In cooperation with World Vision, three meals a day to returnees are being provided in Kaysone Quarantine Center – the largest Quarantine Center in Savannakhet with a capacity of 160 people, but with daily fluctuating numbers of returnees. Through the partnership, 9,870 meals were distributed to 1,007 people at Kaysone Quarantine Centre. The intervention will be scaled to include Quarantine Centers in Vientiane Capital, Champasak, Sayaboury Provinces in July.

In collaboration with MoIC, LNCCI, and other related Government institutions, the UNCT has surveyed and monitored industry/manufacturing workers and firms on COVID-19 impact and compliance with the Prime Minister's COVID-19 Orders and advisories (focus: COVID-19 prevention measures and payment of workers during lockdown). Most manufacturing factories have been scaling towards full operations throughout June and continue to look for adaptive strategies to maintain production, whilst ensuring the safety of workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. With this, factories have considered spacing of work benches, increased operating hours to implement shift work arrangements, and have improved basic wash and waste management facilities where possible. UN Partners, in coordination with the Government, continue to monitor the local operators and provide virtual online trainings and other countries best practices to support businesses in implementing strong preventative measures and their business continuity.





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## EDUCATION

All students returned to school in June, and the Back to School Campaign has been completed. An [Education COVID-19 Response Plan](#) developed in April is being used by MoES to guide its response actions, assisting students to continue learning in a safe environment. MoES has been supported in developing and implementing the Back to School Campaign Plan, utilizing a [COVID-19 Prevention and Response in Schools](#) and the [Framework for Reopening Schools](#). A global online learning platform is in the process of being adapted to the Lao context as a teaching and learning tool for students and teachers.

The UNCT Partners provided technical assistant to MoES, in coordination with MoH, to develop several risk communication materials for schools (videos, posters, etc.), outlining the importance of physical distancing in schools as well as sharing information on proper hygiene practices.

A GIS-enabled online platform for planning and monitoring of the education COVID-19 response was approved by MoES and is soon to be rolled out. This will enable near real-time monitoring of COVID-19 prevention activities in schools, provide comparable data on school WASH facilities and other resources to support continuity of learning. The platform can also be used by MoES and Partners in undertaking rapid assessments for additional COVID-19 related interventions and future disasters.

IT equipment (cameras, video editing computers, and thermometers) was handed over to the Research Institute for Educational Science (RIES) of MoES as a support to produce educational programmes for the Lao Education TV.

To ensure continuity of learning, home learning materials developed with UNCT support are airing on TV and online platforms by MoES, reaching an estimated 72% of the population. Discussions are ongoing to develop a new video series for children with the early childhood education group.

UN Partners are reviewing options on how to best capture the potential opportunities for skills development, e-learning, and vocational education linked to employment services and the industry as a crucial element to supporting household-level income generation. A consultant has been hired to undertake a needs assessment in July, and initial findings will be shared when available.



## LOGISTICS (Global Supply Chain, Health, National Supplies)

To bridge the gap during the suspension of commercial flights, the WFP Aviation continues to support humanitarian operations in the region through weekly cargo and passenger flights between Kuala Lumpur, Yangon, and Vientiane. The WFP Aviation Service supported 40 passengers engaged in humanitarian and development programmes enter and exit from Lao PDR, as well as assisting in the delivery of 3.7 tones of personal protective equipment for health workers and 7.8 tones of life-saving vaccinations.



## COMMUNICATIONS, TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

A wide spectrum of Partners has been engaged to disseminate correct information on COVID-19 through multiple channels, including civil society, media, the religious community, social media influencers, networks of workers of education and health sectors, volunteer networks, Migrant Resource Centres and recruitment agencies working with migrants, private sector companies, including public transport and truck operators. Programme outreach capacities of the UNCT, including community radio and community volunteers, have also been utilized.





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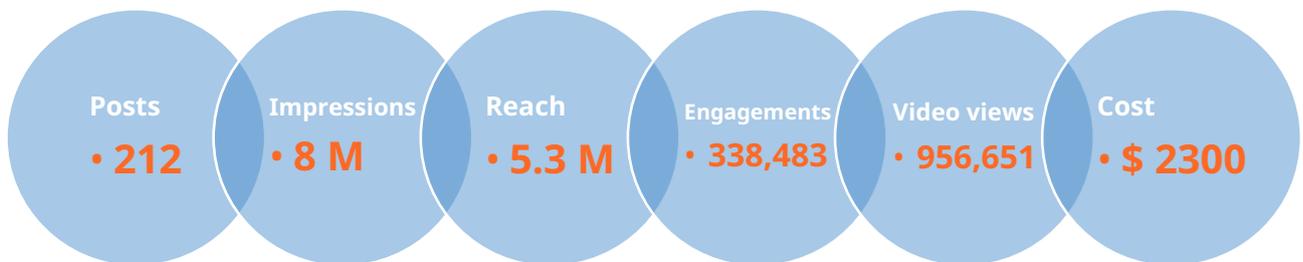
Ten videos have been developed jointly by MoES and the UNCT for providing online comprehensive sexuality education to secondary students through Education and Sports TV channel.

All public primary and secondary schools were provided with printed risk communication materials on COVID-19, reaching more than 700,000 children (51% girls). Another 740 schools were provided thermometers to support the implementation of safe school operations as per global and national guidelines.

During the reporting period, 766,205 people saw online materials of the Back to School Campaign, with 32,535 engagements on social media. TV and Radio public service announcements (PSAs) have also aired nationally over the past two weeks aimed at parents, teachers, and children with key Back to School messages. Daily messages were sent through WhatsApp groups primarily aimed at teachers and administrators and have reached around 1,500 education professionals throughout the country.

To support the UN Communications Group (UNCG) and the Governmental Risk Communications Taskforce, a specialized UN Specialist Volunteer has been recruited for the role of Coordination Officer for COVID-19 Communications and Partnerships Support, funded by UNV through the central Response Mechanism for COVID-19 pandemic put in place by the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF).

By 30 June, people saw social media posts eight million times in total, which generated over 338,000 engagement actions (likes, comments, shares):



Next Situation Report: 20 August 2020

