



UNITED NATIONS
KUWAIT



OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR STATE OF KUWAIT

CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLAN
COVID-19 (2020/21)

**“We are in this together and we will
get through this together”**

UNSG – Antonio Guterres

RCO COMMUNICATION & ADVOCACY
25 MARCH 2020







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CONTEXT



The purpose of this communications plan is to ensure preparedness for a timely, consistent and coordinated response of the UN System in Kuwait in the event of a threat to public health.

Effective communication and public information, especially in times of crisis, are both a practical tool and an operational necessity, as it can play a vital role in helping to manage a fragile or deteriorating situation. There are two crucial aspects to crisis communications:

External Communications: Government and National Authorities, community, the media, the private sector, and the civil society;

Internal Communications: staff members and their dependents.

In the event of an emerging crisis, the Designated Official will form a Crisis Team (CT) or Risk Crisis National Communication & Committee Engagement composed of focal points from the key UN Agencies relevant to the crisis.

The UNCG CT shall determine the immediate communication needs and develop an implementation plan with clear responsibilities. The RC will clear this plan with the UNCG Chair/ co-chair, who shall alert all members of the UNCG about the establishment of the crisis team. All UNCG members shall continue to be copied on updates and relevant communications messaging and plans. The CT shall have weekly meetings (via teleconference) view the current circumstances during the different phases of the crisis (during and after).



CRISIS COMMUNICATION GROUP

As part of the mitigation efforts in responding to the COVID-19 outbreak, the UN RC in Kuwait will activate the Crisis Communications Group. This sub-group consists of agencies' focal points on communications.

The group will develop an Emergency Communications Strategy and Information Kit that provides situation updates, FAQs and information on how to prepare for the emergency and mitigate the effects of this unusual situation using UNICEF /WHO/DGC guidelines, information and resources and the government guidance.

Additionally, it will focus on communicating coordinated key actions taken by the UN Resident Coordinator and the UN Country Team as per their mandates; mapping of available information and required future content; and common messaging in responding to COVID-19. The information shall be made available in both English and Arabic.

The group is also tasked to liaise with and assist WHO/ UNICEF in conveying standardized and harmonized medical advice and risk communications to UN staff and dependents through UNDSS during the Preparedness, High alert and Emergency modes.



MESSAGING

The UN in Kuwait must relay consistent and coherent information and data during a crisis. The UNCG crisis team shall agree on messages relevant to Kuwait Context, focusing on: (Handwashing; Stigma; Misinformation and rumors; Isolation; Women; Children and Youth education and entrainment; Confusion about testing)

- A means for clearing and releasing information (if required) in a routine and predictable manner on social media and the media;
- When sensitive information can be released publicly,
- The UNCG chairperson/co-chair shall assign focal points from within the crisis team to develop a set of common overarching country-level core messages, reflecting any guidance received from WHO, DGC, UNICEF and headquarter offices.
- Messaging shall be cleared by the UNRC. Individual entities may issue their own advocacy messages as per their respective mandates; however, this messaging must build on the set of common country-level core messages and be shared with the UNCG crisis team.
- The UNCG chairperson/co-chair shall share the country-level core messages with all UNCG members who should circulate them among their respective organizations. (Mechanism to be developed)

COMMON MESSAGING: UNRC

External messaging should consist of two sets (RC & UNCT):
The UN Resident Coordinator Social Media plan shall consist on the following:

- 2 to 3 daily social media posts/ messages (preventive, current situation, informative)
- 1 weekly 2min video update from home of useful info of Kuwait's progress and response in collaboration with UN and globally. To be disseminated to the UNCT (for further dissemination among the their respective agencies platforms) and to the media and partners.

Samples of Messages:

The United Nations in Kuwait - through WHO Regional Office (KSA) - is working closely with the national government, civil societies, scientists, clinicians, supply chain experts and partners from the public and private sector - in delivering a robust support system to respond to the issue.

The UN family in Kuwait would like to commend all the frontline health and emergency service workers who are working tirelessly in responding to the situation – and we would like to call on support from everyone during these difficult circumstances. To come together in common humanity; and to stand together in compassion and solidarity – and without stigma. (Scenario 2/3 messaging)

***Please see appendix 1 for full set of key messages.*

COMMON MESSAGING: UNCT

The United Nations Country Team Response:

Call for Action through producing call for awareness campaign to target a large audience such as the UNICEF initiative in Lebanon:

- Address Children through animated videos on Education from home (UNESCO Guidance)
- Prevention at home
- Series of infographics (graphic designer)
- Initiate a series of challenges
(#Safehands / #عشان_الكويت_اشغل_نفسك_وخليك_بالبیت)
- Announcing a case of COVID-19 among UN personnel

Learn from Tala on how you could protect yourself from the Coronavirus



How to protect yourself and others from the infection?



PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IDEAS

Topic	Message	Material Available
Playing/ studying with children at home	Tips for parents/caregivers	Games samples posts? UNICEF/UNESCO
Guidance and Coping with isolation and stress	Maintaining healthy lifestyle when quarantined. Support children in time of stress	Contact UNICEF/ WHO for GCC context adapted package with different visuals (tips and stories) create a whatsapp group for the task force; promote the whatsapp platform created by UNDPWHO-UNICEF;
Stigma, Rumors and infodemics	Follow WHO and Government instructions – avoid fake news	OHCHR / WHO/ Government
How to talk to your children about COVID19	Tips to help comfort and protect children	Stories and tips from WHO /UNICEF
Washing hands challenge	Protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID19	In collaboration with MOI Influencers and hashtags
Other challenges to target youth and other age groups	عشان الكويت اشغل نفسك وخليك بالبيت UN75 survey	RC; Youth and UNCT Bulk messages Zain Influencers
Health workers	People commitment to instructions will help health worker do their job	Videos and Posts from WHO Influences Join efforts with MOI MOH COVID-19 landing page website



SPOKESPERSON

In times of crisis, the UN system, at the global, regional and country level, must respond with a coordinated and disciplined approach to communications. In situations where more than one UN entity speaks out, the internal and external messaging must be consistent and complementary. This will reinforce the credibility of the Organisation and its response with stakeholders, including the public.

The Resident Coordinator (RC/DO) is the primary responsible and accountable for coordinating UN crisis management efforts in-country UNCG co-chairs. The Public Information Officer at RCO is delegated the Spokesperson authority when advised by at the UNRC/DO.

WHO coordinates the UN response to serious health emergencies including those rising to the level of a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). WHO Regional Office in KSA is the principal source of information and also leading agency in regard to COVID-19 – including official UN spokesperson.



MEDIA RELATIONS

The Public Information Officer at RCO will be contact with relevant local and national media that can then be used for the dissemination of press releases, op-eds, media advisories and invitations to briefings and interviews.

The UNCG CT shall organize and prepare media briefings, interviews, updates and background briefings, with the participation of UNRC, UN Heads of Agencies relevant to the crisis, as needed. The frequency of briefings will be determined by the gravity of the situation and the availability of information. The UNCG crisis team shall prepare and agree in advance some media lines for potential questions (See Contingency Plan).

Media briefings (if required) shall take place virtually, at the UN house or a neutral public place easily accessible to the media. Official UN branding should be visible including for example flags, backdrops, banners, podium signs and logos.

In advance of any media briefings, the UNCG crisis team will review and share their respective statements to ensure commonality of purpose and to avoid duplication and contradiction. UNCG members must use the country-level core messages and media lines when briefing the media. Numbers and facts need to be checked before being released publicly. UNCT Spokesperson must avoid opinions, speculation and alarmist or emotional language in all communications materials. The UN must also be open and willing to respond publicly to criticism.

The Public Information Officer shall monitor relevant local media clippings to be shared through a daily digest with all UNCT members, the international community and government partners. The RC should be advised when an inaccuracy is found in a media report. All inaccuracies and factual errors should when necessary, be rebutted.

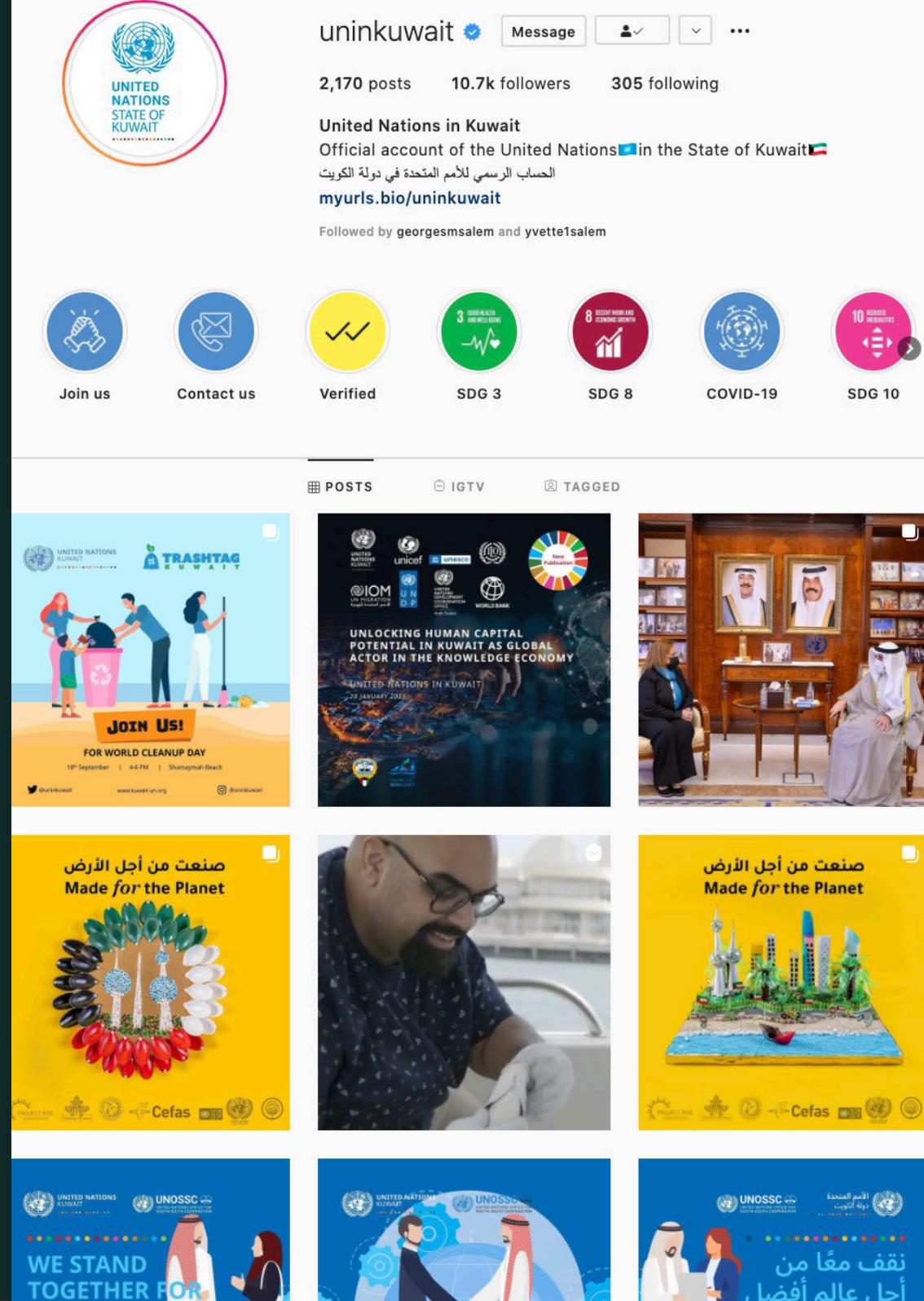
SOCIAL MEDIA

The content of UN accounts shall be consistent with the aims, activities and purposes of the United Nations. Any content issued on institutional accounts is considered official UN communication. The accuracy and sensitivity of content must be considered before posting, especially during a crisis.

The RCO Public Information Officer shall ensure that UN social media accounts managed within the country are consistent with the country-level core messages. No entity will post information during a crisis that has not been verified by RCO.

At the onset of a crisis, on behalf of UNRC, the RCO Public Information Officer shall disseminate relevant policy and guidance relating to the use of social media to all UN personnel in country as a reminder to staff to ensure that their personal content does not adversely affect their official duties or the interests of the United Nations.

When applicable, the UNCG CT will decide on a coordinated hashtag to be used in conjunction with individual entity hashtags.



COMMUNICATION FUNCTION

The purpose of effective communication is to support the UN system in communicating to its own staff and dependents and to assist the government in media communications and risk communications as part of the response effort. During the high-alert and emergency mode, specific communication functions are activated as follows:

- UN Resident coordinator - on UN response efforts in Kuwait.
- WHO on health-related emergencies.
- UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) to communicate to staff and dependents.
- Spokesperson on regular media briefing when advised by RC.
- RCO Head of staff- COVID19 coordination and information sharing of updates and guidelines with UNCT
- IOM/UNHCR/OCHA/UNICEF and other relevant agencies to communicate on vulnerable groups.



SHARING PLATFORMS

- A sharing platform will be created in Teams will be created to capture information materials available in English and Arabic and shared with UNCG/UNCT colleagues.
- Internal communications dissemination of information and staff education: Information about the health threat and the UN contingency plan will be regularly provided to UN staff through UNDSS.
- Townhalls: (Virtual) townhalls will also be utilized to brief staff with the Resident Coordinator and WHO providing updates and answering staff questions.
- UNCG dropbox to include all agencies resources, branding, videos, guidelines and material



As per RCO contingency plan (Annex 2) and UNDSS SMT guidance:

- For any change between operating modes will be taken by the RC/DO. The WHO Representative will support the RC's decisionmaking to switch from between modes. The SMT members will support the RC's decisionmaking to switch from High-alert to Emergency Mode.
- The UN in Kuwait may alternate between these modes throughout the course of an event. The decision

Operational Mode	UN Focus of Activities
Preparedness	Focus on achieving resilience and readiness. UN operations continue as usual.
High-Alert Mode	Focus on staff safety, crisis management, support to decision making & operational continuity. During an event, the UN system will focus on managing the crisis – in addition to maintaining regular operational and programmatic functions. Depending on circumstances, individual agencies may decide.
Emergency Mode	Focus on staff safety & security. The UN as a whole will scale back its operations to only critical operations and programmes. The UN will support the government in its response activities.

FUNCTIONING OF THE UN IN KUWAIT BY OPERATIONAL MODES

Crisis Communication Activities & Timeline High Alert Mode Scenario: a few numbers of identified cases

No	Communication Activities	Remarks	Person in charge
1	Continuous internal messaging to UN staff in Kuwait Media /social media monitoring	<p>Strengthening internal communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email blast to all personnel in Kuwait comprise of FAQs on the identified case through daily monitoring of Kuwait media and UN social media platforms. - UNSG Spokesperson daily headlines - Response plan and other key information such WHO's Coronavirus (COVID-19) communications daily updates 	<p>Daily digest – Spokesperson headlines, Communication Officer WHO Daily updates, RCO Head of Office Contingency plan, RCO Head of Office Safety and Security messages by DSS</p>
2	2 to 3 posts by RC per day 1 video post by RC weekly	<p>UN in Kuwait social media channels; and cross-posting by agencies.</p> <p>Tweet, post, retweet; reshare; or regram content from WHO or UN timely.</p>	<p>Public Information Officer UNCG CT MOI Influencers</p>
3	UN in Kuwait awareness campaign on COVID-19 (media sensitization)	<p>Communicating key messages and animated videos of UN in Kuwait coordinated efforts in supporting and responding to COVID-19; Using brief technical guidance from WHO, UNICEF, DGC</p>	<p>Public Information Officer Partnership Officer UNCG/WHO MOI – Influencers and PS Sponsors</p>

WHO HEALTH ALERT BRINGS COVID-19 FACTS TO EVERYONE VIA WHATSAPP

This messaging service has been launched into four languages

English | **French** | **Spanish** | **Arabic**

WhatsApp ChatBot links are available on SharePoint – “Volunteer Management Knowledge Base”

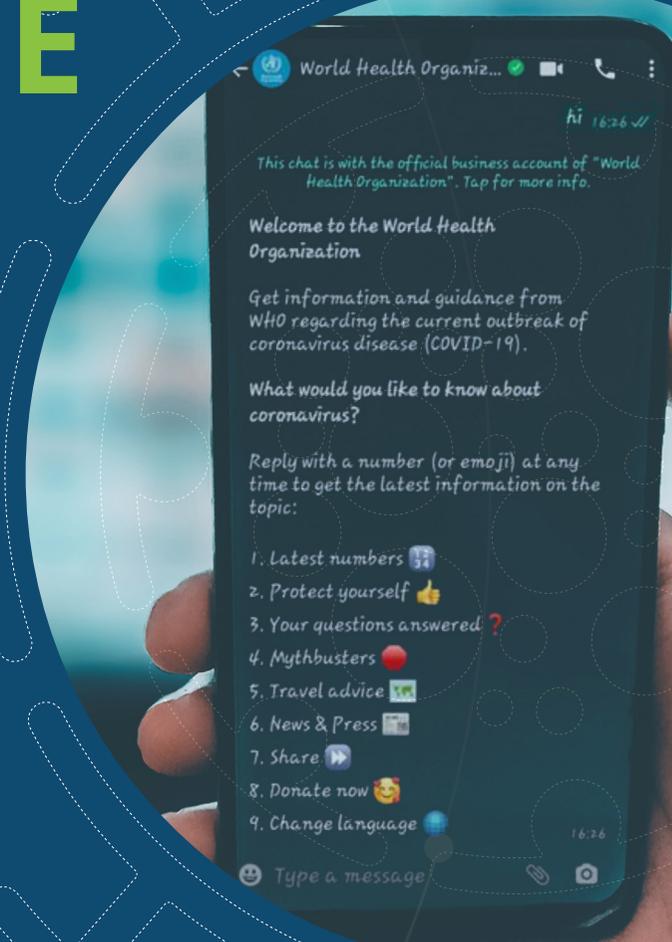
Direct Link: <https://undp.sharepoint.com/sites/UNVknowledgeMng/SitePages/WHOadvises-via-WhatsApp-chat-bot.aspx>

COVID-19 for UNV Personnel - Issues and Fre

UNV Administrative Guidelines for the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak - Operational Measures for Management of UN Volunteers

(English), (French), (Spanish)

World Health Organization (WHO) emergency page on: Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, WHO LIVE dashboard and **WHO advises via WhatsApp bot**



13 UPDATES AVAILABLE FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES

UN Kuwait Social Media Accounts

 @uninkuwait

 unitednationsinkuwait

 @uninkuwait

 www.flickr.com/people/uninkuwait/

www.kuwait.un.org

 <https://bit.ly/3E2BTca>

WHO Situation Dashboard

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/685d0ace521648f8a5beeeee1b9125cd>

<https://www.who.int/COVID-19>

<https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/information-un-system>

WhatsApp Tool

<http://bit.ly/who-covid19-whatsapp>

WHO Situation Reports

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novelcoronavirus2019/situationreports>

UNWFP World Travel Restrictions

<http://unwfp.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/db5b5df309ac4f10bfd36145a6f8880e>

COVID-19 Dedicated UN Website

<https://www.un.org/coronavirus>

Dedicated Social Media Trello Board

<https://trello.com/b/vumsShVd/covid19-social-assets-messaging>

UN News Updates

<https://news.un.org/en/events/un-news-coveragecoronavirus-outbreak>

UNICEF Resources

<https://uni.cf/coronavirus-CO-AR>

<https://www.unicef.org/reports/key-messages-actions-coronavirus-diseaseprevention-control-schools>

<https://educationcluster.box.com/s/omehkh4pd37qcb8zlk7wp9c10hi15jzj>



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