



**Our social  
contract with  
stakeholders**

**We connect for  
a better future**



# Vodacom – SDG programme

In the midst of this pandemic global leaders, including the United Nations, are calling for an integrated recovery to rebuild affected economies while keeping sight of mechanisms that will promote inclusive and sustainable measures post the COVID-19 recovery. Inevitably, an economic recovery that is based on investments in fossil fuels and non-inclusive development runs the risk of reversing past accomplishments towards the achievement of sustainable development which has the potential to increase disastrous social, environmental and economic effects on society. Vodacom continues to support the SDGs and focuses on eight goals that are most aligned to our core business. Vodacom continues to leverage mobile network services to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.





We connect for  
a better future



## Vodacom's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic is the most devastating global health calamity of the 21st century. The pandemic has exacerbated already existing societal challenges, thus increasing inequalities and mobility constraints. Vodacom's response to the pandemic had to be strategic and systematic in its approach with a specific focus on the most affected areas of society. Vodacom's response to the pandemic is aligned to its purpose of connecting society for a better future through the three purpose pillars, namely; digital society, inclusion for all and planet. Additionally, Vodacom strives to maintain its social contract in the midst of the crisis, which is defined by the principles of fairness, trust and leadership. Vodacom's response to the pandemic was implemented in two phases. Phase 1 of the six-point plan focused on the health crisis while Phase 2 of the plan addressed the economic recovery.

Phase

1

# COVID-19 six-point plan

Phase 1 outlines Vodacom's immediate response to the health crisis as well as interventions implemented to save lives and provide societal support.

Point

1

## Maintaining quality on the service networks

To assist government and citizens to stay connected during the COVID-19 pandemic and national lockdown, Vodacom maintained a high level of resilience and quality of service in our network amid the increase in traffic. This was done through the following actions:

Vodacom maintained a network availability of >95% as prescribed by the ministerial directives of the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies.

Vodacom was granted a licence on 20 April 2020 for the temporary assignment of spectrum in the IMT700, IMT800, IMT2600 and IMT3500 bands.

Vodacom spent an additional R500 million to upgrade network capacity in response to increased network traffic during the national lockdown. This increased the capacity and resilience of the Vodacom network.

Since April 2020, Vodacom invested R7.7 billion (until December 2020) into its network in response to increased network traffic during the national lockdown to expand and increase the capacity and resilience.

Vodacom launched base station sites with 5G technology using the spectrum that was temporarily assigned by ICASA.



### Vodacom spends R500m to ease lockdown network congestion

By **SEAN MUGAOKO**, Senior news journalist  
BusinessDay, 18 Apr 2020

Read more: [Sean O'Neil](#)



Vodacom Group chief technology officer Andries Dejean

Internet reference

## Point 2

## Providing capacity to critical government services

Vodacom provided health workers with access to connectivity and digital solutions, delivering significant support to COVID-19 remote consultations, data collection and testing.



We have donated 20 000 smartphones in partnership with Samsung, 100TB of data & 10 mil voice mins to the National Department of Health. This will help frontline health workers to transmit data in real time as government accelerates its #Covid\_19SA testing campaign. #StayConnected



### Vodacom partners with Samsung to provide 20 000 smartphones

Vodacom donated 20 000 smartphone devices to the National Department of Health and the Department of Social Services. The smartphones were configured to enable health screening in remote communities and support social workers to monitor the social impact of the pandemic. Vodacom contributed a total of R15.5 million towards this initiative.



### Preventing gender-based violence and empowering women

In the midst of the pandemic, the Vodacom Foundation donated personal protective equipment (PPE) to the Gender-Based Violence Command Centre (GBVCC) to assist with the increased number of social workers needed to accommodate an increased number of phone calls. Additionally, Vodacom hosted a public Facebook panel discussion, themed 'Surviving Violence' in August 2020. The guests included Rosie Motene, Taki Netshitenzhe and Cheryl Hlabane. The panel discussion was moderated by Lebo Mashile. More than 8 000 people logged into the event.

### Discovery and Vodacom are giving free virtual Covid-19 consults

The purpose of the partnership is to get easily accessible coronavirus consultations for every single South African

01 APRIL 2020 - 14:27 by WARREN THOMPSON

Internet reference

To date, **48 000 South Africans** have used **Online Doctor Consult** which provides free virtual screenings and doctor's consultations in partnership with Discovery.

- Vodacom partnered with Discovery to launch a free online COVID-19 screening app that enables easy and seamless screening for COVID-19 symptoms.
- The Vodacom Group CEO donated 33% of his salary to the Solidarity Fund in South Africa for a period of three months. Furthermore, Vodacom employees personally contributed the amount of R680 000 to the Solidarity Fund. Vodacom matched the amount, thus bringing the overall contribution to >R847 000.
- In 2014, Vodacom partnered with the Department of Social Development to launch the GBVCC. The GBVCC serves as both a mechanism for prevention in the form of counselling for the survivors and perpetrators of GBV. During the COVID-19 crisis and lockdown, there has been a significant increase in the number of GBV phone calls to the GBVCC. One of the main reasons for this increase was that GBV victims were locked up at home with their abusers. To illustrate the extent of the problem, in 2019; the total number of phone calls to the GBVCC was 87 092 (of which over 1 800 were related to GBV). In 2020 (between 1 January and 30 December 2020) the total number of phone calls to the GBVCC was 181 113 (of which 6 008 were GBV related).

Vodacom CEO Shameel Joosub pledged an additional **R5 million** to fight GBV in South Africa.

## Phase 1: Point 2 – continued



## Vodacom launches and zero-rates Bright Sky SA

According to the latest GBV research, one in four women will experience violence at the hands of men and women are five times more likely to be killed by a man in a GBV incident when compared to other countries. In 2020, Vodacom launched and zero-rated Bright Sky SA, which provides support and information for anyone in an abusive relationship. The app is an important part of Vodacom's bid to help fight GBV, strengthening prevention through awareness and education, and directing those affected by GBV to the support services available to them.



### Point 3

## Improving dissemination of information to the public



Vodacom provided health workers with access to connectivity and digital solutions, delivering significant support to COVID-19 remote consultations, data collection and testing.

- Vodacom distributed >2 million SMS notifications to our subscriber base on hygiene etiquette related to COVID-19 in partnership with the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies and Government Communication and Information System;
- Vodacom diverted >R10 million of advertising spend to support the Department of Health's awareness campaign;
- Vodacom zero-rated the Department of Health's USSD self-assessment platform; and
- Vodacom shared COVID-19 information videos on various Vodacom online platforms.

### Point 4

## Facilitating working from home and supporting SMEs

Vodacom provided data and voice minutes at a reduced rate to facilitate working from home for SME customers.

Vodacom extended preferential payment terms (payment within 1-15 days of receipt of invoice) to qualifying SMEs within our supply chain database that had potential liquidity challenges.

Vodacom extended credit to SMEs through our financial services platform VodaLend.

## Point 5

### Facilitating e-Learning

- Vodacom zero-rated educational websites including the Wikipedia search engine.
- To facilitate learning from home during the national lockdown, the Vodacom e-School platform added over 400 000 learners between March 2020 and January 2021 exceeding one million users. The platform has curriculum-aligned educational material for grade R to 12 learners and is free to all Vodacom customers.
- Vodacom provided a six months supply of anti-bacterial hand soaps to 12 schools of excellence, 11 early childhood development (ECD) centres, and 10 youth academies.
- Vodacom provided a video conferencing solution to 92 Vodacom supported teacher centres and 13 schools of excellence.
- Vodacom provided discounted data packages of 30GB at universities to promote blended learning.



Louandra Arjunan

#### Vodacom's virtual tutoring employee volunteerism programme takes off

The national lockdown has seen drastic changes to the way people live and work. This has impacted Vodacom's volunteerism programme. Vodacom employees were invited to participate in the programme as virtual tutors primarily focusing in STEM subjects. Learners who participated in the programme were allocated with free monthly data bundles to ensure contact with their tutors. In April 2020, Louandra Arjunan, a discover graduate in the Big Data department, signed up to be a virtual tutor to one of the Grade 12 learners at a Vodacom School of Excellence in KwaZulu-Natal. Louandra tutored Xoliswa, a Grade 12 learner, in mathematics every weekend from April to December 2020. Louandra would contact Xoliswa via WhatsApp and video calls on a weekly basis. Xoliswa saw a drastic improvement in her marks from 40% to over 60% during her trial exams. When she applied to the University of KwaZulu-Natal, her application was initially declined. However, after six months of tutoring, she reapplied with her new exam results and was successful. **"Signing up to be a virtual tutor was the best decision ever. I was able to help Xoliswa achieve the best and believe in herself," Louandra said.**

**I was able to help Xoliswa achieve the best and believe in herself," Louandra said.**

## Phase 1: Point 5 – continued

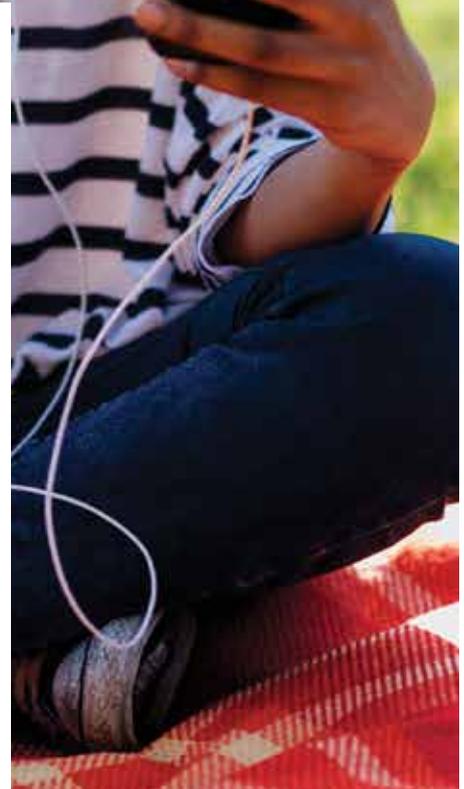
Point  
6

## Improving government's insights into people's movements in affected areas

- Vodacom partnered with the National Institute for Communicable Diseases and the Free State Department of Health to analyse as well as model generalised and anonymised data of citizen movements.



Internet reference





## Health and safety of our employees in the midst of COVID-19

Vodacom continues to protect its employees and business partners against the COVID-19 pandemic by embracing its digital-first culture to stay engaged remotely. To ensure consistent engagement and support of employees, Vodacom provided various support programmes that included employee exposure analysis, daily tracking, a parenting support programme, contingency plan webinars, a medical advisory facility, virtual on-boarding for new

employees, GBV prevention support and regular engagements with the CEO. To enable employees to work from home, Vodacom encouraged them to take their office chairs home, and also encouraged online learning and development activities. Additionally, Vodacom provided various relief packages to its business partners such as hardware relief, rental relief, staff support and hotshot payment, and balanced scorecard average payment.



## Vodacom launches COVID-19 employee assistance programme

Vodacom has resolved to set aside R2.5 million from the Disaster Fund to set up an employee assistance programme. This programme is aimed at providing financial relief to employees who have been impacted by the effects of COVID-19. This could be a loss or reduced household income resulting in the inability to meet financial obligations, COVID-19 related medical expenses not covered by medical aid, or the unfortunate death of a family member.





## Phase 2

# COVID-19 six-point plan

Phase 2 of the COVID-19 crisis plan leverages and builds on the successes of Vodacom's Phase 1 efforts with the objective of restarting the economy and stimulating employment. This phase aims to leverage the network, digital platforms and data analytics capabilities to deliver economic value for society, government and business.



**Point  
1**

## Expanding and future-proofing the network infrastructure

- In 2018, Vodacom pledged to invest R50 billion over five years towards the deployment of 4G, 5G and fibre technologies in South Africa. The objective was, and still is, to drive digital inclusion. As at March 2020, Vodacom had spent R28.3 billion, which represents 57% of the total pledged.
- Since April 2020, Vodacom has invested R7.7 billion (until Dec 2020) into its network to maintain resilience and reliability.
- Vodacom is encouraged by ICASA's publication of the invitation to apply for the auctioning of high-demand spectrum (which the regulator intends to complete by March 2021).
- The licensing spectrum in the lower bands (700MHz and 800MHz) will go a long way towards extending coverage in the rural and underserved areas, while the higher bands (2600MHz and 3500MHz) will assist in modernising Vodacom's network to ease traffic congestion in our cities.



Vodacom launched the Together campaign that encouraged people to stay at home and trust Vodacom's network: **"Stay safe and stay connected"**.

## Point 2

## Accelerate support to government e-Health, e-Education

Vodacom worked with the Department of Health to support health facilities in South Africa through technology.



### eLABS supports health facilities during COVID-19

Vodacom, through Mezzanine, introduced a pathology management solution in 2017 to provide visibility in the value chain of testing, analysis and reporting in the laboratory. The application tracks, traces and sends blood test results electronically. The eLABS pathology management solution was expanded to a multi-testing model in July 2020 to include visibility of COVID-19 tests in the laboratory value chain. Over 2 800 service points were deployed and >3 million tests processed in South Africa.



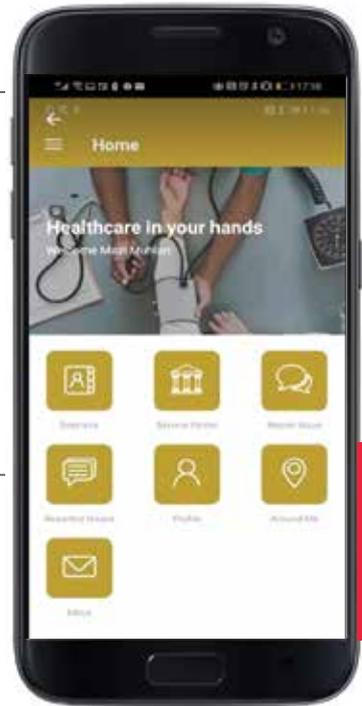
### Stock Visibility Solution supports health facilities in times of the COVID-19 pandemic

- The Stock Visibility Solution (SVS) is a mobile platform developed by Vodacom through Mezzanine to monitor medical stock levels in health facilities. To date, the SVS has been deployed in 350 hospitals across eight provinces in South Africa with over 41 million stock updates completed in 2020.
- In 2020, the scope of SVS was expanded to include PPE stock monitoring for frontline staff. The SVS supported 350 health facilities to monitor stock levels of PPE such as masks, gloves, sanitisers, visors, gowns, boot covers and goggles.
- PPE stock items were added to 3 500 health facilities already using SVS.
- Vodacom added a module to capture occupational health and safety information from the facilities to ensure that PPE protocols are followed.



## Mpilo application

As part of the citizen engagement platform, Vodacom introduced the Mpilo application; which is a patient engagement platform (PEP). The PEP facilitates efficient and easy communication between patients, doctors and the Department of Health. The application has improved coordination in tracking issues logged by patients and hospital staff. This application has been rolled out in Gauteng and Mpumalanga. The latest feature on the mobile app aims to assist health workers to trace people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and was used to create awareness about COVID-19 safety precautions.



Internet reference

The **patient engagement platform** currently has 48 010 active users in Gauteng and 31 active users in Mpumalanga.



**81 058 active users on MySAPS**

Vodacom expanded its digital platforms to support society in the midst of the pandemic. For instance, the Mum & Baby platform that currently supports over 1.8 million users with antenatal information was expanded to include a COVID-19 assessment tool. This is a free and easy-to-use triage tool that enables customers to assess their symptoms and calculate their risk of exposure to COVID-19.

## Phase 2: Point 2 – continued



- Vodacom continues to drive greater adoption of the e-School platform, as well as mySAPS app which assists with effective and efficient crime reporting and prevention.
- Vodacom partnered with Microsoft to provide access to continuous and connected digital learning for South Africa's education institutions, educators and learners through the Connected Digital Education initiative. The Connected Digital Education platform enables remote learning with affordable connectivity.
- Vodacom provided 10 000 masks and sanitisers to 141 schools in the Vodacom Western Region to assist learners and teachers.
- Vodacom purchased face masks, hand sanitisers for adults and disinfectant soaps for children in 92 teacher centres, 12 schools of excellence, 11 ECD centres and five NPOs.
- 25 university and 58 TVET college websites have been zero-rated to provide tertiary learners free access to the Homepage, e-Library, and e-Learning portals.
- Vodacom conducted health and safety site inspections at all Vodacom supported teacher centres and 13 Schools of Excellence to ensure that the centres were compliant with COVID-19 health and safety regulations.



### Vodacom provides a video conferencing solution to 92 teacher centres and 13 schools of excellence:

The Vodacom Foundation rolled out a video conferencing solution that is similar to the virtual education solution offered by Vodacom Business. The main objective of the video conferencing solution is to enable the broadcasting of a class from one teacher centre or educational institution to multiple teacher centres, schools and individuals. The solution further enables learners to access educational broadcasts and information remotely, which has been helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic.



### Virtual GDE admissions

Vodacom partnered with Boxfusion to develop a modern and smart learner admission solution for the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) that went live in June 2020. Through this initiative, the citizens of Gauteng are now able to place their children at GDE schools, have their documents verified and children placed, all from the comfort and safety of their homes in the midst of the pandemic. The solution identifies and applies at five schools within the feeder zone (as defined by the department) and manages admissions to one of the desired schools.



### Point 3

## Enhance digital accessibility and literacy for the most vulnerable



- In March 2020, Vodacom launched the connectU platform, which provides free access to basic internet and essential services. To date, 13.4 million unique users visit the connectU platform with over 20 million sessions initiated in a month. To address some of the lockdown restrictions imposed on all South Africans, our customers were able to use the platform to purchase electricity and water.
- Vodacom continues to drive the adoption of low-cost smartphones and explore innovative funding models through our Vodacom Financial Services.
- Vodacom launched the Remote Customer Calling programme where we repurposed capacity from the regional, retail and field services operations to make CARE calls and share information about Vodacom's digital platforms and services.
- Through Project Phoenix, Vodacom provided offers that responded to the stay-at-home needs of our customers, such as providing affordable home internet packages to our family or household segment, as well as high-value customers and aspirers.
- Vodacom provided youth targeted offers through NXT LVL solutions that provided aid to youth consumers during this time with a specific focus on social, entertainment and learning needs. Vodacom priced youth 1GB deals at R19, launched Future Jobs Finder and zero-rated the National Mentorship Movement and Youth Employment Service which is a government and corporate joint initiative to get one million young people employed over the next three years.

Vodacom zero-rated over **900 government websites**, including online applications for IDs and passports.



### Vodacom e-School exceeds one million users

The Vodacom e-School platform is proving to be invaluable for learners learning from home as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. To demonstrate the phenomenal uptake of Vodacom e-School during this time, user registrations on the platform have increased 1000% since lockdown, while content utilisation increased 300% when compared to previous annual averages. Mathematics, natural sciences and accounting were the most popular subjects on the platform. The increase in registration started with Vodacom e-School going from an average of 40 000 to a peak of close to 150 000 student events per day.

Point  
4

## Promote widespread digital adoption for businesses particularly SMEs



Vodacom aims to enable SMEs to emerge from the pandemic stronger than before by facilitating the adoption of safe and secure digital solutions utilising advances in the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, big data analytics and financial services platforms.

Vodacom customised affordable data packages for SMEs to ensure that they remain resilient through the economic recovery period.

Vodacom continues to leverage the VodaLend platform to extend credit to SMEs. This will assist in maintaining a reasonable level of financial viability.

Vodacom provides preferential payment terms (payment within 1–15 days of receipt of invoice); to ensure that SMEs remain financially sustainable in the short term.

Through our partnership with Alipay, Vodacom aims to create a rich digital ecosystem for financial transactions that will enable SMEs to reach a broader range of customers.



### The Bread Box Bakery

The Bread Box Bakery was one of the first SMEs to receive funding through VodaLend during the COVID-19 national lockdown. This funding played a crucial role in feeding more than 100 children in Midrand. Founder Matlhogonolo Ledwaba says, **“VodaLend made a material difference to our business. They provided invaluable ongoing support and advice. We expanded our product range and our customer base, and the business growth has created more job opportunities”**



**Point  
5****Support exit strategies through targeted digital adoption**

Vodacom continues to engage with government and other local and international agencies to explore new use cases for anonymised and generalised data.

To further support the battle against COVID-19 we have zero-rated the COVID-19 South Africa app which sends users notification of any recent exposure to the virus.

**Point  
6****Enable cashless payments and financial inclusion**

Vodacom's financial services portfolio has been growing steadily over the past few years. Some key highlights include the growth of the Vodapay platform to over 285 000 active users, Vodacom's Airtime Advance service used by over 9.9 million users, and Vodacom having registered over 1.9 million insurance holders. An opportunity exists for Vodacom to expand its suite of digital payments, lending and insurance financial services to more South Africans and businesses, enabling cashless financial transactions. Therefore, in 2020, Vodacom announced its partnership with global leader Ant Financial Services to develop a "super app" in South Africa. This partnership is a significant milestone to promote and accelerate financial inclusion across Africa.



Vodacom employees personally contributed the amount of **R680 000 to the Solidarity Fund** and Vodacom matched the amount to reach a total of >R847 000.



**48 000** South Africans have used **Online Doctor Consult** which provides free virtual screenings and doctor's consultations in partnership with Discovery.



Vodacom **zero-rated** over **900 government websites**, including online applications for IDs and passports.

# 2020 at a glance



Vodacom extended **preferential payment terms** (payment within 1–15 days of receipt of invoice) to qualifying SMEs.



Vodacom, in partnership with Samsung, donated **20 000 smartphone devices** to the National Department of Health and the Department of Social Services.



The Vodacom **e-School platform** exceeded **one million users**, adding over 400 000 learners between March 2020 to date.

0%

Vodacom **launched and zero-rated Bright Sky SA**, which provides support and information for anyone in an abusive relationship.



VodaLend issued business funding worth **R50 million** to more than 300 individual SMEs.



Vodacom has reached **13.4 million** unique users on connectU.



Mum & Baby has **1.8 million** subscribers accessing **free maternal health educational content**.



The patient engagement platform currently has **48 010** active users in Gauteng and **31** active users in Mpumalanga.



Vodacom has resolved to set aside **R2.5 million** from the Disaster Fund to set up an employee assistance programme to support individuals affected by COVID-19.

