

## Message from the Head of Mission and Force Commander

Dear Colleagues

Nine months have already passed since the WHO declared COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern. To date, this is the sixth time a global health emergency has been declared and it is the most severe. As evidence related to the pandemic rapidly evolves, and vaccines are reportedly developed, the basic measures to prevent the spread remains unchanged: keep social distance, regularly wash your hands, avoid crowded and enclosed areas, and wear your mask as recommended.

Most countries have now lifted or reviewed their travel restrictions pending the submission of a negative RT-PCR result. I am pleased to inform that UNISFA has acquired the RT-PCR equipment testing for COVID-19. I am also grateful for the Medical Staff who are now certified in conducting and analysing tests.

Nevertheless, as the number of cases in Sudan and South Sudan increase and in light of the cases identified within the Mission, I urge all staff members to strictly observe and comply with the protocols established by the COVID-19 Task Force based on WHO guidance. The Task Force supported by a Compliance Team has also established a vigorous compliance system. I would like to express my appreciation for the extra effort carried out by the members.

As stated by the Director General of WHO, Dr Tewodros Adhanom "The bottom line is that one of the most fundamental ingredients for stopping this virus is determination, and the willingness to make hard choices to keep ourselves and each other safe."

I thank all colleagues for your resilience and endurance to pursue the implementation of our mandate, in spite of the increased operational challenges.

Let's continue our job, for the benefit of the people of Abyei, and let's stay safe!

"The bottom line is that one of the most fundamental ingredients for stopping this virus is determination, and the willingness to make hard choices to keep ourselves and each other safe."

Gen. Kefyalew  
Amde Tessema



# UNISFA C19 News Brief

Regular updates on the  
Mission's response to  
COVID19

## COVID 19 MISSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Covid-19 Task Force has continued to ramp up efforts to detect, prevent, and quickly respond as the risk of the virus continues to spread globally. Priority areas of preparedness include establishing quarantine/isolation facilities and providing critical medical and other supplies while strengthening sensitisation and closely monitoring the unfolding situation in the region.

One reported case was confirmed among civilian personnel and five others among contractual personnel. Two others have recovered. Personnel who test positive are required to adhere to the stringent measures to contain the spread of the virus. These include quarantining while undergoing treatment and additional testing to confirm status before the affected personnel are allowed to resume work.

Following the reports of confirmed cases, contact tracing was carried out to identify secondary cases and their contacts to curb transmission. All the 25 contacts who were traced tested negative. Meanwhile, one positive case was reported in Khartoum and is said to be stable. While contact tracing is underway and the medical team closely monitors the situation, staff working in Khartoum have been asked to self-quarantine.

Meanwhile, the number of confirmed cases within the Abyei community remains at 52 cases and five deaths. However, due to the lack of testing capability, the data might not reflect the true picture on the ground.

The mission continues to operate with a substantial number of staff while practising a flexible working-from-home modality. The resumption of inbound flights on the Khartoum-Abyei and Entebbe-Wau-Abyei routes has allowed the movement of personnel and crucial supplies. Discussions with GOSS and Ugandan authorities continue to enable outbound flights from Abyei –Wau-Entebbe.



## FEMU establishes Covid-19 quarantine facilities for Covid-19

From the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, Femu has taken swift action for the prevention and control of the disease while carrying out its day-to-day activities. The priority was the preparation of quarantine/isolation areas, organising individual accommodation for those sharing, as well as providing resources to combat the virus.

**Preparation of Isolation and Quarantine Points**  
Former FC area- Three self-contained rooms were converted into quarantine/isolation points and handed over to Level 1 and level 2 hospitals. The quarantine facilities are each made of 1x3 modules, with a room, toilet and shower.

**Former HOM area** - Femu prepared a six-module prefab for quarantine and Covid-19 facilities. This includes five self-contained rooms with own toilet, shower, a Covid-19 laboratory and a Shellbox for PCR screening.

**VIP area** - Femu prepared four single-module self-contained rooms, which are being used to quarantine international visitors.

**Individual accommodation** - Two critical activities have been carried out in MSA 6. First, is the accelerated construction of individual accommodation in phase 1. Additionally, officers who were living in shared accommodation were moved from MSA 2 to MSA6 to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 spread.

Secondly the construction of MSA 6 Phase 2 was completed before the arrival of 100 officers in October. This was done in time for the facility to be used as quarantine facilities for the officers. On the completion of their mandatory quarantine, the new arrivals were relocated to their respective team sites.

**PPE and other provisions for team sites**

FEMU and CWU are offering technical as well as material support to team sites to support the establishment of COVID-19 preventive measures. Materials required for modifying and upgrading facilities were provided. These included electrical items, air-conditioners, tables and chairs, dustbins, hygiene materials, among others.



## TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

While COVID-19 restriction measures have been known to save lives and protect people's health, concern has been raised about the impact of such on people's mental health and well-being. Fear, worry, and stress are just some issues that people are dealing with due to the changes in daily routines including working from home, lack of physical contact with other family members, friends and colleagues. The impact is particularly difficult for people with existing mental health conditions.

WHO recommends some tips and advice on how you can cope: Keep informed. Listen to advice and recommendations from your national and local authorities. Follow trusted news channels, such as local and national TV and radio, and keep up-to-date with the latest news from @WHO on social media.

- **Have a routine.** Keep up with daily routines as far as possible, or make new ones.
  - Get up and go to bed at similar times every day.
  - Keep up with personal hygiene.
  - Eat healthy meals at regular times.
  - Exercise regularly.
  - Allocate time for working and time for resting.
  - Make time for doing things you enjoy.
- **Minimize newsfeeds.** Try to reduce how much you watch, read or listen to news that makes you feel anxious or distressed. Seek the latest information at specific times of the day, once or twice a day if needed.
- **Social contact is important.** If your movements are restricted, keep in regular contact with people close to you by telephone and online channels.
- **Alcohol and drug use.** Limit the amount of alcohol you drink or don't drink alcohol at all. Don't start drinking alcohol if you have not drunk alcohol before.
- **Screen time.** Be aware of how much time you spend in front of a screen every day. Make sure that you take regular breaks from on-screen activities.



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- **Social media.** Use your social media accounts to promote positive and hopeful stories. Correct misinformation wherever you see it.
- **Help others.** If you are able to, offer support to people in your community who may need it, such as helping them with food shopping.
- **Support health workers.** Take opportunities online or through your community to thank your country's health-care workers and all those working to respond to COVID-19.

### Don't discriminate

Fear is a normal reaction in situations of uncertainty. But sometimes fear is expressed in ways which are hurtful to other people. Remember:

- Be kind. Don't discriminate against people because of your fears of the spread of COVID-19.
- Don't discriminate against people who you think may have coronavirus.
- Don't discriminate against health workers. Health workers deserve our respect and gratitude.
- COVID-19 has affected people from many countries. Don't attribute it to any specific group.

### MYTH BUSTERS

From myths on alcohol, bleach and weather to water and antibiotics, we have all heard them. However, we all have a role to play in getting and passing on the right information about COVID-19, in order to protect ourselves and our loved ones.

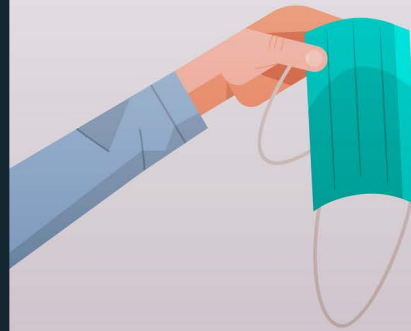
Here are some facts about COVID-19.

**The COVID-19 virus can spread in hot and humid climates.** The best way to protect yourself against COVID-19 is by maintaining physical distance of at least 1 metre from others and frequently cleaning your hands.

**The COVID-19 virus CANNOT be spread through mosquito bites.** To date there has been no information nor evidence to suggest that the new coronavirus could be transmitted by mosquitoes. The new coronavirus is a respiratory virus which spreads primarily through droplets generated when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose.

**People of all ages can be infected by the COVID-19 virus.** Older people and younger people can be infected by the COVID-19 virus. Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and heart disease appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus.

**Antibiotics CANNOT prevent or treat COVID-19.** Antibiotics work only against bacteria, not viruses. COVID-19 is caused by a virus, and therefore antibiotics should not be used for prevention or treatment.



### Waste management during Covid-19

New demands on the UNIFSA waste management, occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic, have created the need to expand the existing waste processing facilities. This is because, with the advent of the pandemic there has been an introduction of new potentially biohazardous materials including discarded single use face masks and material from quarantine facilities.

Prior to the pandemic, general waste was processed at the Waste Management Yard, while biohazardous waste from the mission clinics was handled only by the Level II clinic in Abyei HQ. The level II clinic is equipped with a special medical waste incinerator for this type of waste.

Waste from quarantine facilities is relatively easy to collect because it is generated in one place. However, discarded face masks are difficult to handle because they are not generated in one place and are normally strewn all over the compound. To decrease possible cross-contamination, FEMU has placed special marked bins for used masks only at places where high volumes of masks are discharged. These include the main entry gate, clinic areas and the designator camp contractor attendance monitor places. These bins are lined with plastic bags for ease of disposal. This has greatly reduced the number of single use masks ending up in the general waste and is contributing to lessening the risk of COVID -19 transmission.

## Key Contact Telephone Numbers

Coordinator COVID-19

Task Force / **3979**

CMO/FMO / **3283 / 3940 / 3319**

Call Center (Hotline) / **3030**

Bar Assistant / **4891**

GCC / **3293 / 4493**

PX / **3291**

### Construction of Covid-19 Store for Centralized Warehouse

Among the immediate challenges presented by the pandemic, was the need for additional and dedicated storage facilities for COVID-19 supplies. UNISFA has always struggled with shortage of storage space and many supply items are therefore stored in containers. However, with the threat of COVID-19, there was increased urgency for new, stand-alone and easy to access storage facilities.

After moving a few containers, a new facility consisting of two six-module prefabs was identified. It was also clear that the temperature of the new facility had to be controlled to prolong shelf life of the supplies. The prefabs were therefore fitted with air-conditioned units. Since the facility is located away from existing buildings, there was no electrical connection available. A mobile generator was installed in the for lighting and air conditioning. With newly constructed COVID-19 supply store, UNISFA is well prepared to receive and store any supplies needed to combat the virus.



## Doctor's CORNER



PROTECTION  
COVID-19

### Coronavirus Prevention



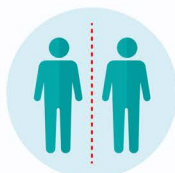
Wash hands  
with soap/  
sterilizer



Cover your nose and  
mouth  
when sneezing



Put tissues in  
the trash bin



Keep social distance



Wear mask



Don't touch your face

## For Questions

Kindly send an email to the UNISFA  
COVID-19 Task Force :

[UNISFA-COVID-19-Task-Force@un.org](mailto:UNISFA-COVID-19-Task-Force@un.org)



For COVID related  
broadcasts, please visit:

<https://unisfa.unmissions.org/unisfa-broadcast-messages>