

WPP'S COVID-19 ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT

In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic wreaked havoc across the world causing 82.4 million confirmed cases and, tragically, 1.8 million recorded Covid-19 deaths¹, and shrinking the global economy by around 4.4% or £4 trillion².

While our industry is far from the front line of tackling the pandemic, we do have an important role to play. During 2020 we worked with governments, commercial clients, NGOs and international health bodies including the

World Health Organization (WHO) to produce public awareness campaigns to help limit the spread and adverse health and economic impacts of Covid-19.

As part of our annual impact assessment, we investigated the potential benefits of such campaigns³. Our analysis highlighted the significant potential societal and economic value generated by the campaigns, but also the substantial challenges in quantifying and

attributing the impacts to specific campaigns when Covid-19 dominated the media.

The table below summarises some of the findings from three of our campaigns, highlighting the broad range of potentially associated impacts and values.

i For information about how we conducted this analysis, see page 63

CASE STUDY

SUPPORTING THE WHO

DOVE'S "COURAGE IS BEAUTIFUL"

P&G'S "#DISTANCEDANCE"

THE ACTIVITY

The "impact driver": the campaign including the message, and the inputs and outputs.

- **The challenge:** to support the WHO's global and regional public awareness campaigns to help limit the spread of Covid-19 and its impact on society
- **The solution:** GroupM and Wavemaker sourced free media space, donated by global media partners, to communicate messages including the "five heroic acts" of social distancing, sneezing in elbow, not touching face, washing hands and staying home
- **The result:** US\$45 million in free media space and pro bono work secured and delivered across 167 countries with more than 450 media owners

- **The challenge:** to celebrate the selflessness and bravery of healthcare workers
- **The solution:** featuring frontline workers' powerful portraits in digital out-of-home media and films, thanking them directly and showing that Courage is Beautiful
- **The result:** 2 billion earned media impressions
- For the full case study, see page 38

- **The challenge:** to communicate stay-at-home and social distancing messages to a younger audience
- **The solution:** collaborating with TikTok's number one global influencer to create #DistanceDance, a Covid-19 safety campaign designed to reach a demographic who might not watch the news through traditional channels
- **The result:** most viewed video in the history of TikTok with 17.7bn views
- For the full case study, see page 25 of our Annual Report 2020

THE SOCIAL OUTCOMES

The behavioural change induced by the campaign.

- Many people watching these messages will have changed their behaviour in the ways suggested, thereby reducing transmission of Covid-19
- The campaign helped to drive over 33 million visits to the WHO website, increasing people's understanding of the pandemic

- Those who saw the adverts and posts will have greater respect for medical workers
- 360,000 people shared their own stories using the hashtag on the first day, acknowledging the inspiring medical workers in their lives on social media

- Many young people who saw the video will have socially distanced and stayed at home more than they might otherwise have, reducing the transmission of Covid-19

THE SOCIAL IMPACTS

The consequences of the change in behaviour.

- The changed behaviour and mindsets will have resulted in fewer and less severe cases of Covid-19, resulting in fewer hospitalisations and deaths, and less worker sick days

- The respect shown to medical workers, in particular nurses, will have in part inspired them to be more resilient and improved their wellbeing – energising them to help treat more patients and provide better care and further enhance the wellbeing of patients
- The impact is likely to have extended to other medical workers beyond those featured in the campaign and benefited their patients, too

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THE SOCIAL VALUE

The change in human wellbeing, or the "societal and economic value", of the impacts. Values can be assessed qualitatively, quantitatively or in monetary terms.

- The value of the impacts includes:
- The theoretical "value of lives" saved
 - Reduced hospital and medical costs
 - Maintained and enhanced wellbeing and quality of life of those that did not get infected or who suffered less severe illness than they would have otherwise

- The value of the impacts includes:
- The value of lives saved, reduced hospital and medical costs
 - The wellbeing and improved mental health of nurses and medical staff
 - Maintained and enhanced wellbeing and quality of life of those that did not get infected or who suffered less severe illness than they would have otherwise
 - The wider benefits from enhanced human values, networks and relationships strengthened (ie social capital)

- The value of the impacts includes:
- The value of lives saved, reduced hospital and medical costs
 - Maintained and enhanced wellbeing and quality of life of those that did not get infected or who suffered less severe illness than they would have otherwise

¹ World Health Organization.

² World Bank.

³ Detailed methodology set out on page 63.