

## **Introduction**

COVID-19 took the world by storm late 2019, and we have been grappling with the effects of a widespread pandemic ever since. To slow the spread in South Africa, the government closed the borders and people stayed home during an extensive lockdown. The number of infections peaked in August 2020, so the government slowly eased restrictions. Researchers around the world are scrambling to develop an effective vaccine, but until then, people are advised to wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds, maintain a 2-metre distance from others, wear a mask outside of their house, and stay home if they exhibit any coronavirus-like symptoms. These actions have been difficult to implement in regards to education, and the return to in-person learning has contributed to a surge in cases in other countries (Wan and Balingit 2020). With the beginning of the new academic year quickly approaching, South African universities need to develop comprehensive plans to keep students and staff members safe. In particular, they need to focus on preventing outbreaks in student housing to keep the campuses open. Young people do not generally experience intense cases of COVID-19, but they can spread it to other people that may be high-risk. Even though young people are generally at low risk, young people must take preventative measures so they do not infect others.

Health behaviour theories, like the Health Belief Model, attempt to explain how people decide to change their health-related behaviours. Building on these theoretical frameworks, research has highlighted the role of mass media campaigns in improving or preventing negative behaviour changes across large populations (Wakefield et al. 2010). In the same way, social media has been used to facilitate discussions and exchange information online related to HIV (Taggart et al. 2015). As demonstrated, there is increasing evidence supporting the use of targeted campaigns to change health-related behaviours. Therefore, *Dala UCT* targets the University of Cape Town (UCT) students living in residence halls. The primary objectives of the campaign are to educate them about COVID-19 and implement preventative measures (if they are not doing so already) in their daily lives. This will be accomplished through a variety of tactics, including photo booths, social media posts, posters in residence halls, mask distribution, and automated WhatsApp messages.

## **Campaign objectives**

The overall objectives of the campaign are to educate UCT students about the risks of COVID-19 and increase the number of students participating in preventative measures. Success will be measured based on the completion of the following deliverables:

- Distribute 7 500 masks to all students living in res
- 1 000 or more student posts on social media using the campaign hashtag
- Increase of at least 20% in student risk perception regarding COVID-19
- 40% enrolment in WhatsApp messages
- Increase of at least 20% in preventative measure participation
- Maintain a budget of R878 500

## Campaign framework

For decades, scholars have analysed how people make health-related decisions and developed a plethora of relevant theories. Specifically, the Health Belief Model (HBM) consists of “...several primary concepts that predict why people will take action to prevent, to screen for, or to control illness conditions...” (Champion and Skinner 2008:46). These include susceptibility, severity, benefits, barriers, cues to action, and self-efficacy. In simple terms, people’s health-related behaviours are affected by their perceived likelihood of contracting the illness, perceived seriousness of the illness, perceived benefits of taking preventative actions, perceived barriers towards taking actions, cues to act, and their ability to successfully act. We hypothesise that by developing HBM constructs related to COVID-19, people will change individual behaviours and implement preventative measures after being exposed to *Dala UCT*.

## Target Audience

Throughout the pandemic, young people have been accused of spreading the virus and failing to take precautionary steps. The World Health Organization reported that at one time, young people were the main spreaders of COVID-19 (Wan and Balingit 2020). Young people primarily exhibit just mild symptoms, so they may not know that they are infected and spread the virus to those around them. In South Africa, the situation remains consistent with the rest of the world. Infections in people between the ages of 20 and 29 accounted for nearly 20% of the entire country’s cases in May (IOL Reporter 2020). Despite this, the youth death rate is extraordinarily low and comprised less than .5% of deaths in South Africa in June (Staff Writer 2020). Even though youth are still getting infected, their risk perception may be low because they are statistically unlikely to die, and they primarily only develop mild symptoms if infected. Unfortunately, they can still spread the virus to high-risk people who are more likely to die or have intense symptoms. The university must develop a comprehensive campaign that allows students to return to in-person classes while still enforcing preventative measures.

Therefore, the *Dala UCT* target audience is students primarily between the ages of 18 and 25 who live in res at the University of Cape Town. We selected UCT based on the size of the campus and its proximity to a major metropolitan area (Staff Writer 2015). Students in on-campus housing play a vital role in preventing an outbreak of COVID-19 that could force the university to temporarily close again. Residence halls house a large number of students in tight quarters, and they have to share facilities and common areas with people outside of their rooms/homes. We have recently seen large outbreaks in the United States that originated in student housing throughout August and September 2020 as students returned to in-person classes (Wan and Balingit 2020).

This particular group of students is extremely mobile, increasing the risk of them spreading the virus off-campus as well. They may have jobs, classes at multiple UCT campuses, take public transportation or the Jammie Shuttle, visit family in other cities or provinces, or attend social gatherings with minimal COVID-19 measures in place. There have even been reports of ‘super-spreader’ events where COVID-19 transmission was high (Spiller 2020). These students are more privileged in regards to access as they may have medical aid, easy access to public and private hospitals, and access to the Student Wellness Centre. Despite this, they are still a vital group to target because they can infect other students, the staff at UCT, friends, family, employees off-

campus, and others they come into contact with. On a positive note, reports indicate that this age group is interested in sharing information about the virus and initiating change in their communities (Makhutja 2020).

### **Campaign timeline**

The 2021 academic year was delayed to account for time missed due to COVID-19, so teaching does not begin in the first semester until mid-March. Assuming there are no vaccines or cures by that time, *Dala UCT* will begin with the research and pre-testing stages in January 2021. It is vital to research the target audience before campaign implementation to test the messages, understand their risk perception, gauge their level of familiarity with the topic, determine the best platforms for distribution, and analyse the challenges they may face in accessing the campaign tactics. This will be conducted through online surveys, Zoom interviews, and one focus group. Every student living in res will receive an email encouraging them to take the online survey in January. In the end, they can indicate their willingness to participate in Zoom interviews and a focus group to obtain more detailed information. Both the survey and interviews will try to understand their social media usage, where they obtain COVID-19 information, challenges in accessing the campaign tactics, risk perception, current preventative actions, likeliness of participating in preventative actions/motivation for doing so, and their feelings towards another lockdown or UCT closing its campus again. In addressing issues of access, we are applying the HBM and identifying what barriers would prohibit students from acting (Champion and Skinner 2008). We are also applying HBM by determining the students' risk perception, or the perceived susceptibility and severity. Immediately following the interviews, the campaign manager will conduct one focus group to test the messaging and tactics on the participants, as well as solidify four mask designs. The same methods will be used during the evaluation phase to determine the success of the campaign and measure exposure to the campaign, risk perception, likelihood to take preventative measures, motivations for acting, and motivation for participating in the campaign. The complete timeline can be found in Appendix A.

### **Messaging and tactics**

The messaging will focus on keeping loved ones safe, preventing a second lockdown, keeping campus open, and simply incorporating a mask into everyday life (Appendix B). These topics are relevant to the target audience and will ideally resonate well with viewers. Online surveys, interviews, and a focus group will provide useful insight into the risk perception, communication preferences, and motivations of young people living in student housing at UCT. This will help develop appropriate campaign messages and determine which platforms to distribute information through. Therefore, the messages and tactics presented in the proposal are tentative and subject to change based on information gathered in the research and pre-testing phases. The tactics outlined below also relate to the HBM concept of cues to action (Champion and Skinner 2008). They all can serve as a cue that triggers students to make the desired action. Ideally, students would be exposed to the tactics and eventually incorporate preventative measures in their routine.

### **Campaign name/slogan**

*Dala UCT* was named accordingly as a local spin on the popular Nike slogan, “Just Do It”. The idea is to encourage the target audience to *just do* the necessary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on the UCT campus, and encouraging students to *just do it* makes the preventative actions seem simple and manageable. In doing so, we are connecting back to the self-efficacy concept of HBM, or affirming students that they have what it takes to make the behaviour changes (Champion and Skinner 2008). We could not use “Just Do It” due to copyright issues, so we selected the popular isiXhosa/Afrikaaps phrase, *dala*. The phrase is South African slang and can mean “making a plan, getting it done, or doing it your way” (Dala n.d.). IsiXhosa is one of the university’s official languages, and most students are likely to know the meaning of the phrase. Even if they do not know the meaning, it may spark their curiosity and encourage them to research the campaign on social media, increasing overall engagement with the campaign’s social media posts. Using slang in the name may be more enticing for students to interact with the campaign, but this will be confirmed in the pre-testing phase.

### On-campus photo booths

During the first two weeks of the campaign, *Dala UCT* will host photo booths outside of each of the nearly 40 residence halls at UCT. Eight students will be hired to operate the stations at each residence hall, and they will be at a different location each day of the week. Each photo booth will last for approximately six hours every day to maximise student participation, and they will consist of a white backdrop, camera/phone, props, and a black square cutout covered in #DalaUCT that resembles a picture frame. All of the photo booths will be located directly outside of residence halls to avoid people congregating in a confined area and to improve airflow. Students will be required to practise social distancing while at the photo booth, wear a mask, and sanitise their hands both before and after using the props. The student managing the station will disinfect each prop after use to ensure that we are following COVID-19 protocols.

Photos can be taken on the camera and sent to students via email, or they can use their camera (the student managing the station will put gloves on and sanitise their hands if that is the case). The participants will be asked if they consent to their photo being shared on social media or appearing on posters around campus, and they must complete and sign a form if they agree. Hosting the photo booths in public areas increases the likelihood that students living off-campus may also participate. While they are not part of the target audience, their participation may help reach more members of the target audience by increasing the campaign’s visibility on social media. This could be problematic in the evaluation stage of the campaign as all posts using the campaign hashtag will be included in the results, regardless of whether or not the person posting lives in student housing. Regardless, this will be the first interaction many students have had with the messages, so it is a vital step to increase the visibility of the campaign. We are starting with a fun and enjoyable tactic in hopes of creating a positive campaign image, ideally increasing student participation in later tactics.

### Social media posts

Social media is a vital method to reach the target audience, so *Dala UCT* consists of two digital aspects. First, students who participated in the photo booth will be encouraged to share their photos on their social media pages. Each post will ideally contain one reason that the individual chooses

to wear a mask and the campaign hashtag, #DalaUCT (Appendix C). Sharing the photos on social media allows for participatory development as the students choose their messages and which platforms to share the photos on, but the posts may also have secondary effects by influencing the behaviours and beliefs of viewers' outside of the target audience. The second aspect involves creating campaign-specific social media accounts to share photos from the photo booth and preventative information regarding COVID-19. We will also partner with UCT to share profiles of people in the university community that died because of COVID-19, with the consent of their family members. Doing so adds a personal touch to the messaging and puts a name to the face of the very people students are trying to protect. As previously mentioned, students who are seeking more information about the campaign or do not know what *dala* means may be encouraged to research the campaign social media pages. These pages will ideally help increase the overall reach of the campaign and serve as a valuable information hub. Since there are two different steps for this tactic, the hashtag will be useful in compiling all of the posts in one place on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. It will also be valuable to count the overall number of posts that used the hashtag in the evaluation phase.

The primary goal of the social media posts is to create campaign visibility online and reach a larger audience. Viewers can read through the posts to learn new information about the virus and understand the importance of enforcing preventative measures. Utilising social media provides an opportunity to successfully reach the target audience based on their extensive online activity. Finally, the social media pages will serve as the campaign hub and help viewers better understand the goals of the campaign.

#### Posters in residence halls

In combination with the social media tactics, we will also print posters and hang them up in communal areas in student housing, including toilets, hallways, and dining halls. The posters will display facts and reminders about COVID-19, as well as quotes from students obtained through the photo booths. Their photos will be visible and paired with a quote about why they take preventative measures (Appendix D). To avoid unnecessary stigmatisation, the posters will not mention whether or not the student tested positive. The posters provide an alternative tactic in case there are members of the target audience who cannot access the digital aspect of the campaign (Bates et al. 2019). The primary goal is to reach members of the target audience that have not previously interacted with the campaign. The secondary goal is to remind students of the steps they can personally take to prevent widespread transmission on-campus.

#### Choose-your-own mask

Masks are one of the most basic tools to protect people from the transmission of COVID-19, and they form an integral part of the campaign. It is only fitting that students living in res receive one mask of their choosing upon move-in. UCT art students will design the masks, and they will be developed and printed in partnership with Vannie Kaap (VK). VK is a local store celebrating and educating others about Kaaps culture, and they sell apparel branded with popular sayings (Vannie Kaap n.d.). Due to the pandemic, VK also started selling masks and have a popular design that reads, "Dala What U Mask". Since *Dala UCT* is targeting a similar design, it is advantageous to partner with the store to reduce production costs while supporting a local business.

Michaelis School of Fine Art students will submit mask designs to the campaign manager who will present the options to focus group participants. They will then select their top four designs, and students living in res will choose their mask through an online form sent to them before move-in. We will send the order to Vannie Kaap over two weeks before move-in to ensure they have sufficient time to print the masks. Each mask will be branded with the campaign hashtag, #DalaUCT, and the VK logo. We will also offer a plain black mask to guarantee a variety of options for students (Appendix E). Masks will be delivered to residence halls before students move-in, and the campaign manager will work with the wardens to ensure that masks are delivered to the appropriate rooms. Each mask will come individually wrapped with a small card encouraging students to wear it around campus and share their photos on social media with the hashtag, #DalaUCT. This tactic will increase the overall campaign visibility when students wear their masks around campus, eliminate barriers students may face in accessing a mask, and promote social media engagement when students share their photos with the hashtag.

### WhatsApp messages

Previous research has highlighted the use of SMS services to share messages about HIV and increase the overall accessibility of health information (Taggart et al. 2015). Therefore, every person living in student housing at UCT will receive an email during the first week of classes regarding automated WhatsApp messages. They can opt-in to receive COVID-19 reminders, and they can also select customised updates for specific on-campus locations. The goal of the messages is to educate students about preventative measures, remind them to do their part, and alert them when common areas are nearing their full capacity (Appendix F). The reminders will contain facts about COVID-19, as well as useful information to stop the transmission of the virus. Every message will contain the hashtag #DalaUCT to maintain consistency throughout the campaign. The primary goals of the messages are to share and increase the accessibility of COVID-19 information, and to comply with social distancing guidelines by alerting students when buildings have nearly reached their capacity.

### **Evaluation**

As discussed above, the campaign will be evaluated using a variety of factors, including online surveys, interviews, social media analytics, budget analysis, and a focus group. Online surveys will be useful to observe the surface-level reach of the campaign by tracking the number of students who interacted with the campaign and their general understanding of the virus. Individual interviews and one focus group will be more beneficial in obtaining a deeper understanding of the campaign's impact. They will begin with unaided recall to determine what elements they remembered without any assistance, but we will transition into aided recall to examine their reactions to elements of the campaign they did not automatically remember. Students will be able to elaborate on their motivations for participating in the campaign and preventative measures to help us understand what led to their behaviour change if any occurred.

The overall campaign reach and engagement on social media can be evaluated by counting the number of posts using the campaign hashtag (excluding those from the campaign social media pages), as well as the number of views, likes, shares, comments, and reactions on the official *Dala UCT* pages. The hashtag will compile all of the posts together to make analysis simple, but this

will also exclude student posts that included other hashtags or omitted the campaign hashtag. One portion of the evaluation will also examine how well we followed our anticipated budget. In the end, the campaign will be considered successful if the objectives are met, students gained more understanding of the virus, we stayed under budget, and more people incorporated preventative measures into their routine.

## **Budget**

Since this campaign follows a multi-step approach, R878 500 of the allocated R5 million budget will be used (Appendix G). One of the largest expenses is designing and producing custom masks for each student. Based on the 2018 student housing numbers, we anticipate a need of 7 500 masks (UCT 2018). In this portion of the campaign, we will partner with students at the Michaelis School of Fine Art and Vannie Kaap to develop and print five mask designs. R5 000 is allocated for each student whose design is selected for production, totalling R20 000. Partnering with (VK) will ideally reduce the mask cost to R50/mask (sells online for R75), totalling R375 000.

Another large portion of the budget goes towards labour costs, including creating and maintaining an automated WhatsApp messaging system. To offset a portion of the costs, we will partner with UCT's School of Information Technology to develop the software. Staff members can express interest in the project to the campaign manager, but they must apply in teams of three with two-student helpers. This saves money on the development side, but it also gives selected students the opportunity to develop their skills through a hands-on project. R50 000 is allocated to remunerate staff and students, in addition to R10 000 for maintenance over the campaign duration. We have also budgeted a significant amount to hire a campaign manager, but this expense can be eliminated if UCT already has an employee to fill the role.

## Appendix A

Task	Timeline
Online survey for students living in res	15 – 22 January
Zoom interviews	22 – 27 January
Focus group meeting	1 – 5 February
Send designs to Vannie Kaap	6 February
Begin distributing masks	23 February
Postgraduate students move-in	25 February
Campaign implementation	26 February
Undergraduate students move-in	1 March
Campaign messaging ends/evaluation begins	31 May
Online survey	1 – 4 June
Zoom interviews	7 – 9 June
Focus group meeting	9 – 11 June
Evaluation finalised	18 June
Tactic	Duration
Mask distribution	23 February – 1 March
Photoboosts	26 February – 12 March
Social media posts	26 February – 31 May
Posters in residence halls	26 February – 31 May
WhatsApp messages	26 February – 31 May



## Appendix B

Sample messages:

- Dala, but with a mask.
- Dala to keep friends and family safe.
- Dala to keep campus open.
- Dala to prevent a second lockdown.
- Dala because it is easy.
- Dala because it is the right thing to do.
- Dala for those who can't.
- Dala for those we have lost to Covid-19.

## Appendix C

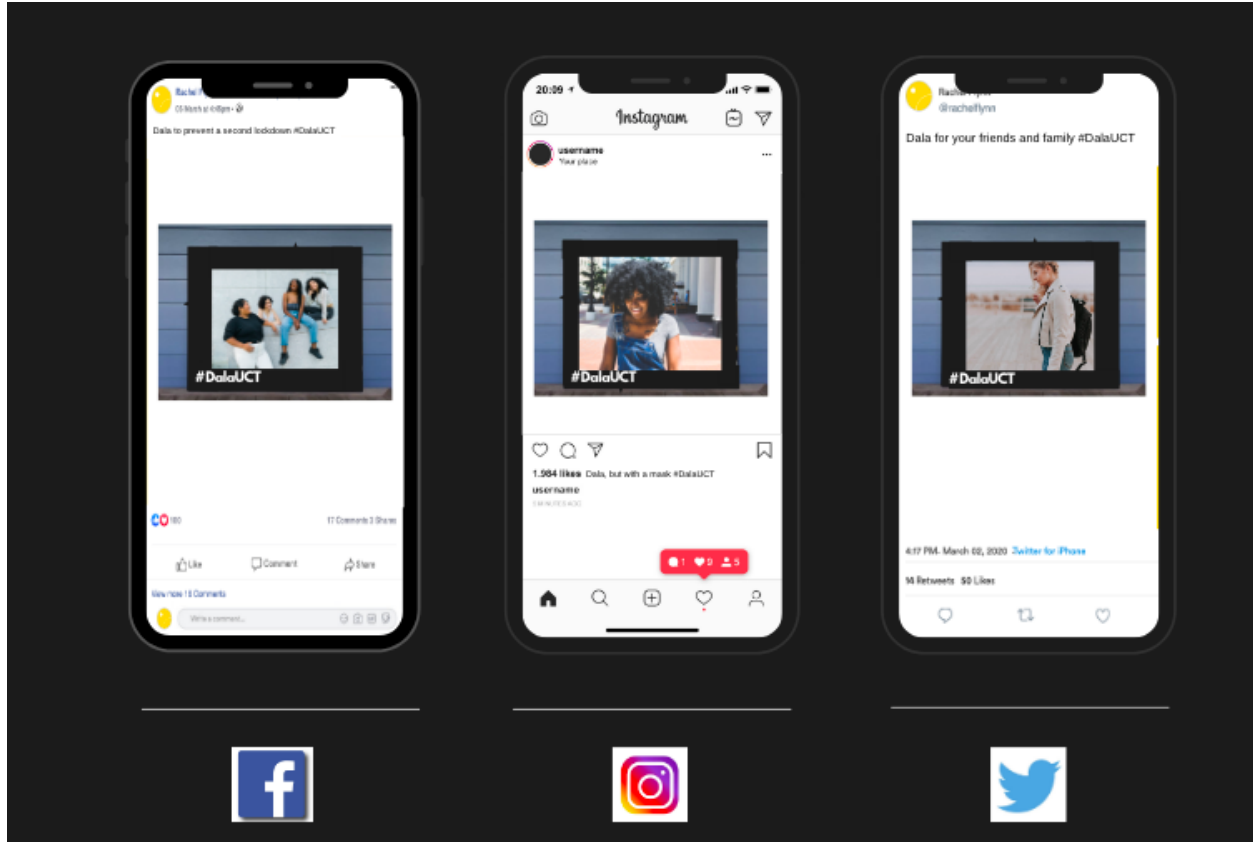
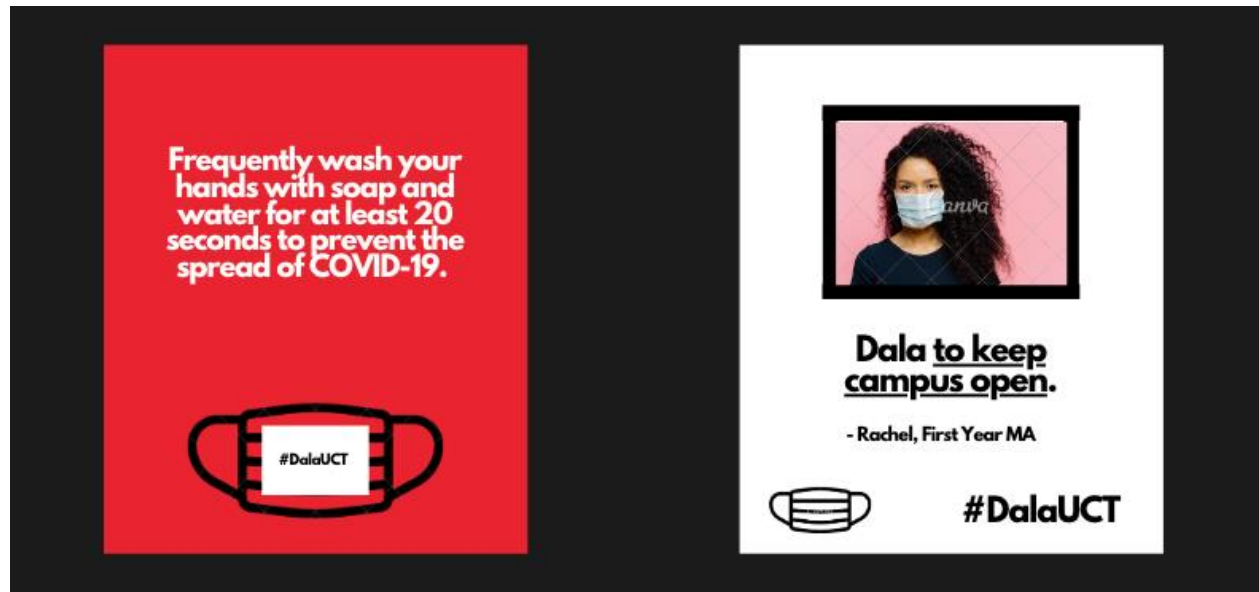


Figure 1 Left: Facebook post reading "Data to prevent a second lockdown #DalaUCT" Middle: Instagram post reading "Data, but with a mask #DalaUCT" Right: Tweet reading "Data for your friends and family #DalaUCT"

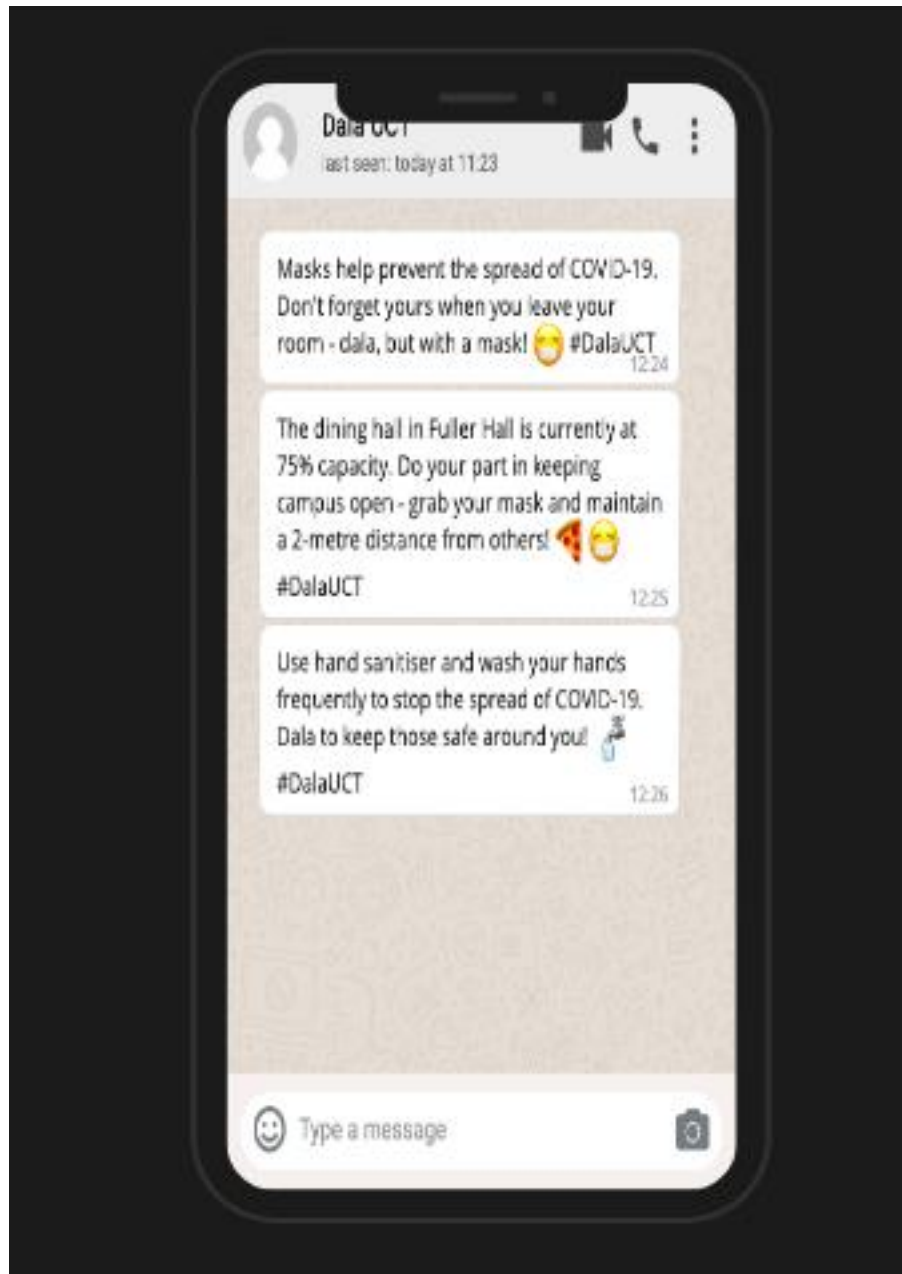
## Appendix D



## Appendix E



## Appendix F



## Appendix G

Expense	Cost
WhatsApp messaging	R50 000
WhatsApp messaging maintenance	R10 000
Mask designs	R20 000
Mask production	R375 000
12 photo booths (backdrops/props)	R12 000
8 students to operate photobooths	R160 000
Campaign manager (6 months)	R250 000
Paper and ink	R1 500
<b>Total</b>	<b>R878 500</b>

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