

WAGGGS STATEMENT ON COVID-19

UPDATED 3 APRIL 2020

COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus, the family of viruses known to cause respiratory infections. Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales.

World Health Organization (WHO) has been assessing this outbreak and has made the declaration this week that COVID-19 can be characterised as a pandemic. WHO is working with global experts, governments and partners to provide advice to countries and individuals on measures to protect health and prevent the spread of this outbreak. WHO emphasises that all must protect themselves from COVID-19 in order to protect others.

KEEPING THE MOVEMENT THRIVING, UNITED AND GROWING

As promised, we want to keep you updated on our teams, programmes and support for Members at this time. Staff are now adjusting to working remotely, which for many of our teams, was already the norm. Whilst some work patterns have shifted, we remain fully committed to delivering for you, our Members.

More than ever, at this time, we recognise the importance of the role and value of WAGGGS, particularly acting as a bridge to connect you and your Members with Girl Guides and Girl Scouts worldwide. That is why we have developed [a digital space for our Members](#) to pool tips, resources and ideas into one place.

It is in these times that we see, share and amplify the very best of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting around the world. We are seeing new and adapted use of tools to keep the Movement united and connected, from online campfires to community badges.

CONTINUING TO SPEAK OUT, RAISE OUR VOICES AND BE HEARD

During this time, we recognise that the physical distancing guidelines in many parts of the world put additional pressure on girls and women. This [WAGGGS Position Paper](#) explores the specific risks and vulnerabilities that girls face, how public health crises can deepen gender inequalities and our call to action.

We know too how important it is for girls to continue to speak out, which is why we will continue to offer platforms for young advocates to continue their work. Our programmes teams are working hard to adapt programming to the current situation, to ensure that girls remain empowered to share their voice and deliver their message at a distance, like the [YESS Programme](#), [Girl Powered Nutrition](#) or Sri Lanka's [online Stop The Violence](#) campaign.

Whilst our World Centres remain closed for bookings, they continue to offer their activities and programming through online training and events, including increased collaboration with the Programmes and Core Mission teams.

Finally, many of our WAGGGS events remain suspended and we are looking at alternative delivery methods for others. As you know, **the World Board will be coming back to you next week with the decision on the best option for this year's World Conference.**



CONTACT

As we navigate this period together, please keep in touch with your Regional Committees, regional coordinators or relationship manager and the Membership team at membership@waggs.org.

For general concerns or questions relating to COVID-19, please contact Magdalene Thomas, WAGGGS Head of International Operations.

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