



Google Joins the World in the Fight Against COVID-19

On May 6th, 2020, Google CEO Sundar Pichai drafted an article weighing into how the company is helping combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Sundar noted that the pandemic is affecting communities in different ways, particularly to the extent of equalizing societies, albeit negatively.

In order to stay in sync with the World Health Organization, Google has set up a 24-hour incident response team. This is even as at internal level, as is being practiced world over, the company leadership meets daily to make critical decisions about its offices globally.

Crucially, Google has since developed structures to support this fight. They include:

- **Finding useful information:** Google' SOS Alert system gives the latest information from the WHO about COVID 19 symptoms, prevention or treatments. To be more effective, the company has through the Ministries of Health in different countries provided official local online sources of credible information and updates from the Government which can be included in a knowledge panel alongside relevant Google Search results.
- **Protecting people from misinformation:** Google's trust and safety team has been safeguarding users from phishing, conspiracy theories, malware and misinformation across its products. Likewise, the company continues to remove COVID-19 misinformation on YouTube, Google Maps, Google Play and in ads.
- **Enabling productivity for remote users, including schools:** More people are using the premium features of Meet, Google's video conferencing app, which Google made available to all G Suite customers at no cost until July 1st, 2020. Google also shared tips and resources for remote workers of all kinds; created new distance learning resources and a new YouTube Learning Hub and a series of blogposts and webinars.
- **Supporting relief efforts and government organizations-** Through Google's philanthropic arm, [Google.org](https://www.google.org), the company is committing USD 50m to the global COVID-19 response and is expected to match up to USD 5m in donations to the WHO Solidarity Response Fund.
- **Advancing health research and science -** Google's affiliate organization that deals with machine learning technologies, [DeepMind](https://www.deepmind.com), released predictions that could help scientists better understand the coronavirus protein structure in order to develop treatments.
- **Decongest internet traffic:** To reduce the burden on online networks as more people go online at this time, Google shifted all global YouTube traffic from high definition (HD) by default to standard definition (SD) by default.

The need to put out all these measures is informed by the fact that this, as Mr. Sundar observes, is an unprecedented moment. "It's important that we approach it with a sense of calm and responsibility—because we have many people counting on us," he writes.

