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Department:
National School of Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



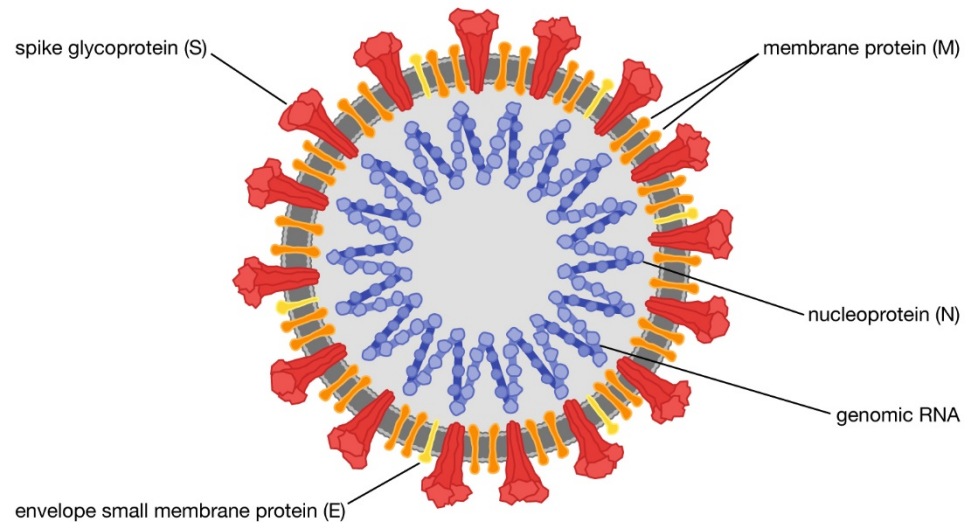
**Nexus of public administration and disaster
management in COVID-19. Johnny Masego Pietersen
(NSG)**

Background

World Health Organisation (W.H.O) declared the pneumonia-like illness initially (Jan 2020) detected in Hubei province of China in November 2019, a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (98 cases) Caused by Coronavirus with severe acute respiratory syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), thereafter named Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) on 11 Feb 2021. Declared a pandemic on 11 March 2021

COVID-19 resulted in the disastrous impact on health systems and livelihoods

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)



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Problem

- COVID-19 affects all facets of life including working conditions in the public sector. Preparation of public administration is important for an adequate response to any disaster. Was the public sector in South Africa adequately prepared to manage COVID-19 as a disaster
- South Africa has a weak public health system and high comorbidities



Theory: Nexus Between Disaster Management and Public Administration

DISASTER MANAGEMENT	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
Disaster as an instant natural or human-caused occurrence which is beyond normal coping mechanisms	Interdisciplinarity of Public Administration Whole of Government theory
Disaster management requires multiple actors and jurisdictions	Multi-sectoral public administration Collaborative Governance Theory
National and international disaster relief frameworks	Different delivery models for public goods Complexity theory Co-production Public value theory



International Framework for disaster management

- Public administration requires policy certainty at national and international levels of jurisdictions
- World Health Organisation (WHO) adopted the The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030). Disaster risk reduction practices need to be multi-hazard and multi-sectoral, inclusive and accessible in order to be efficient and effective
- WHO strategy is prevention, mitigation, emergency preparedness, response and recovery



International Framework for disaster management

WHO released a *COVID-19 Strategy Update* with 5 guiding objectives for countries:

- Mobilise* all sectors and communities to be responsible by owning preventative measures like hygienic hand washing, respiratory etiquette and physical distancing
- Control* mechanisms which entail isolating all cases, and tracing, quarantining with humane treatment, and supporting to the infected and affected
- *Suppress* community transmission by applying all preventative measures including restrictions on travelling
- *Reduce* mortality by providing appropriate clinical care to the sick and protecting the essential workers as well as the frontline workers
- *Develop* a vaccine to manage future infections.



National Framework for Disaster Management

- Section 152 (d) of the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 (1996 Constitution) provides for a safe and healthy environment in the closest sphere, municipalities. Section 11 of the Bill of Rights in the 1996 Constitution indicates that all people have the right to life.
- Disaster Management Act, 57 of 2002
 - preventing or reducing the risk of disasters;
 - mitigating the severity or consequences of disasters;
 - emergency preparedness;
 - effective and rapid response to disasters; and
 - post disaster recovery and rehabilitation



Observations: Strengths

Disaster Management Strategy	Performance
Integrated policy approach	DM Act. Intergovernmental relations National Coronavirus Command Council Essential workers
Integrated direction and policy implementation	5 lockdown levels (Risk Adjusted Strategy) NICD stages: preparation, prevention, movement restriction, testing & Active case tracing, management of hotspots and cluster outbreaks, medical care, bereavement & support and ongoing vigilance
Stakeholder participation and technical advice	Medical experts National institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD)
National and international cooperation	WHO, UN,SADC, AU, Diplomatic relations



Observations: Weaknesses

- Lack of funds
- Policy implementation lacked readiness on availability of vaccine
- Unavailability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) in the beginning- lack of manufacturing capability or effective global supply chain
- Insufficient oxygen in hospitals
- It does not look like the disaster management framework was geared for a pandemic that is as disastrous as COVID-19



Observations: Opportunities

- The review of disaster management framework to anticipate all kinds of disasters
- The need improve economic growth nationally and regionally (manufacturing and digitisation)
- The need to improve health systems including training and recruitment of health practitioners



Conclusions and Recommendations

- COVID-19 caught the world and South Africa ill-prepared
- Review public policies and improve all facets of life to avoid pandemics like COVID-19
- Public administration is central to disaster management



Thank you



The NSG:

Learn: expanding learning opportunities for public servants to master statecraft

Serve: building capacity (& culture) of public servants to serve society effectively

Grow: public servants combine learning & service/experience to grow professionally