

The coronavirus pandemic currently shocking the world gained entry into Nigeria with its first case confirmed on the 27th of February, 2020 in Lagos state. The discovery spiralled into a frenzy of misinformation as the NCDC and Federal Ministry of Health worked to allay citizens' fears and contain the outbreak. It is important that we all play a role in beating the virus by sharing only validated information and promoting effective preventive measures.

The Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC) gathers rumours, concerns and questions from communities across Nigeria to eliminate information gaps between the government, media, NGOs and citizens. By providing the public with facts, the CCC ensures a better understanding of needs regarding the coronavirus and debunks rumours before they can do more harm. Information sharing will be critical to defeating the virus, due to the diverse cultural backgrounds and drawbacks in national education.

Coronavirus poses a serious threat to Nigeria's population of over 180 million people given the country's weak healthcare system, high level of poverty, crowded living conditions and deep-set corruption in government. Economic and insecurity conditions in Nigeria were already tenuous before this outbreak, and Nigeria already fares badly against any health indicators, with high mortality rates and poor life expectancy. When and if coronavirus hits the highly populated communities of Nigeria's cities, it could be a disaster.

It is absolutely critical that Nigeria deals with this pandemic in forward-thinking, open, transparent ways to ensure the well-being of citizens, build resilience and rapidly curb the potential for social conflict. In Nigeria, this is a huge challenge but also a real opportunity to reimagine public health systems, redefine the relationship between citizens and those in power, and reinvigorate governance.

Update on ease of Lockdown measures

On the 29th of June, President Muhammadu Buhari approved the extension of phase II of the ease of lockdown measures from the 30th of June to the 27th of July, 2020. The Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 said that this was done because more time was needed to consolidate on progress being made before easing the restrictions completely. The task force announced some additional measures to be taken which include:



A safe reopening of schools only for students in graduating classes including Primary 6, JS3 and SS3 to enable them prepare for exams.



Interstate lockdown lifted with effect from July 1, 2020, only outside curfew hours



Re-commencement of domestic aviation services

Current restrictions that will continue include:



Maintaining the nationwide curfew (10pm- 4am)



Maintaining the restrictions on mass gatherings and sporting activities



Mandatory use of non-medical facemasks in public spaces with access to government and commercial premises to be denied for persons not wearing facemasks

COVID-19 funds and usage

A list of public and private institutions has made substantial donations to assist the Federal Government in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic in what has been dubbed the COVID-19 relief fund following an appeal for contributions by the CBN. The sum of 25.8 billion naira has been donated by 107 Nigerian companies and notable individuals as of April 18, according to information from the Central bank of Nigeria. Among the biggest donors include the CBN and Alhaji Aliko Dangote, both of whom have contributed 2 billion Naira each.



N25.8Bn

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The questions being asked by citizens are: **"how are these monies being spent?"** Can the government be transparent and accountable to the citizens with the management of these funds?

A private sector led coalition called the Coalition Against COVID-19 (CACOVID) has enlisted CEOs and celebrities to spread awareness for and bring an end to the pandemic, with the target of raising funds to the tune of 120 billion naira to this cause. Some of the actions of CACOVID so far include:



Food relief palliatives

CACOVID set aside the sum of 23 billion naira to be used for the purchase of food relief materials for 1.67 million households, with the aim of feeding 10 million vulnerable Nigerians. The plan is to distribute food items directly purchased from manufacturers to Nigerians in all 774 local governments.

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RUMOURS



VS



FACTS

Face masks cause loss of sense of smell

There is no evidence that wearing a face mask can result in a loss of sense of smell. Research has shown that loss of sense of smell is likely to occur by the third day of infection with COVID-19. The NCDC has officially designated loss of taste or smell as a symptom of coronavirus infection. It is advisable to call a healthcare provider if experiencing any of these symptoms.

Spraying disinfectant into your nose protects against COVID-19

Spraying any form of disinfectant into the nose is highly dangerous, poisonous and can cause damage to internal body tissue. Doing this also does not remedy the lost sensation of smell. Disinfectant should be used on surfaces only.

Face shield can be used in place of a facemask

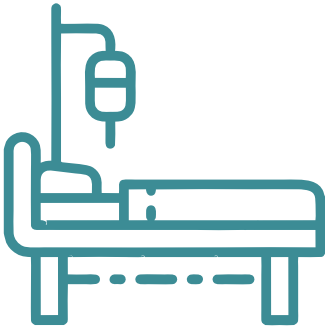
Healthcare workers wear a face shield to protect their faces and eyes from cough droplet sprays when caring for COVID-19 patients, however they are not enough to provide significant protection. A face shield protects only the face but a face mask curbs the respiratory droplets.

Air conditioners protect against coronavirus

Air conditioners do not protect against COVID-19 and it is important to ensure shared spaces are well ventilated. Enclosed spaces with no outlet leave room for rebreathing circulated air. A study in China has linked COVID-19 with air conditioning.

Antibiotics prevent and treat COVID-19

Antibiotics do not work against viruses in general, only bacteria. Hospitalized COVID-19 patients may receive antibiotics to treat bacterial co-infection in the lungs. It is important not to self-medicate. The WHO has warned that overuse of antibiotics for COVID-19 will cause higher resistance of bacteria.



Isolation centres

The CACOVID donated an equipped 150-bed capacity isolation centre at the Mainland Infectious Disease Hospital in Yaba, with a reported budget of 1 billion naira as well as an equipped 66-bed capacity Isolation center which was handed over to the Kano state government.

The coalition also upgraded a specialist hospital in Sobi, Kwara state to 100-bed capacity and developed an equipped isolation center in Port Harcourt. They donated a 65-bed treatment centre in Abeokuta and also donated beds and equipment to the Enugu state government and Abia state government.

Finally, CACOVID partnered with Thisday and Arise Media group among others to transform the ThisDay Dome in Abuja into a 360-bed isolation and treatment centre. Other isolation centres donated include one in Lafia North, Nassarawa state, the Stella Obasanjo hospital in Edo state, the Odukpani Isolation center in Calabar, an isolation center in Ekiti, and another in Bauchi.



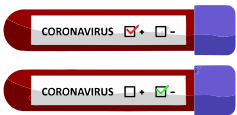
Contact Tracing

The CACOVID is funding part of the Surveillance Outbreak Response Management and Analysis System (SORMAS) and providing for logistics cost of ambulances and movement of patients.



COVID-19 screening tool

CACOVID launched a screening tool which administers a 5-stage questionnaire for users to determine symptoms they might be experiencing and give recommendations on if the user is to isolate and maintain proper hygiene or contact the nearest response centre to their location. The screening tool is located on the NCDC website.



Testing kits

CACOVID has so far ordered 650,000 molecular testing kits to ramp up testing around the country and facilitate testing of asymptomatic patients.



Advocacy and Public enlightenment

CACOVID have hosted a variety of advocacy and enlightenment efforts across several media.

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE IN NIGERIA AT AS TODAY - 15/07/2020

33,616

CONFIRMED CASES

754

DEATHS

13,792

RECOVERED

186,309

TESTED