**Topic: Impact of Corona Virus and Resulting Lock Down on the Nigerian People
Date: 18/04/2020
Name: Woke Jedidiah Chimenem**

**Matriculation number: 19/MHS01/438**

 **Background:**

Clearly the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) that started out as an epidemic in Wuhan, China in December 2019 and ended up as a pandemic (affecting the whole world) is a major talking point. Health systems in most countries are overwhelmed by countless patients in hospitals, many of whom are on ventilators). Global and local economies stand at their worst in decades; the world economy is now declared to be in recession by the World Bank/IMF, and could eventually lead to the deepest depression since 1929.

 The corona virus pandemic has had a negative impact on Nigeria. The lockdowns ordered and restriction of movement has left many starving and lacking income. The economy of Nigeria has also taken a big hit. In response, the Federal Government in response has ordered a lock down in Lagos and Abuja. The combat against this virus will require the Nigerian government to step up and be better leaders. There have been many effects of this pandemic and the lock down.

 **Economic & Financial:**

Nigeria has been hit by the plunge in the demand for energy set off by the global lockdown against COVID-19. The price of crude oil has dropped in price. It went to as low as below $20 per barrel from above $60 just before the pandemic.

This has made a mess of the Nigerian federal government’s budget estimates for 2020; making salaries payment, debt payments and other projections uncertain. This is clearly so because the price of crude oil, which contributes over 90% of Nigeria’s externally-generated revenue, now hovers around $30 per barrel, which is far less than the budget’s benchmark of $57 per barrel, and this signifies tough times ahead.

The International Monetary Fund says Nigeria's economy is expected to shrink by 3.4 percent this year and Africa's largest economy could face a recession lasting until 2021.

 **Political:**

The Nigerian government is particularly fearful because of the way the pandemic has quickly overwhelmed health care systems; glaringly exposing the decades-long short-changing of the health sector in the various states.
On the other hand, Nigeria has 323 confirmed cases of COVID-19. These numbers are, however, far from the true reflection of the situation in Nigeria, based on the fact that testing is not being carried out on a large scale.

It is now very evident that there was really no preparation to arrest the earliest cases of COVID-19 entering into the country which could have been done at the points of entry into the country, especially at the international airports. Effective quarantine of travellers coming into the country, since the Chinese outbreak became news in January could have been done. It was not until much later, by 18 March 2020, that Nigeria eventually placed a travel ban on 13 countries with high incidence of the disease. The regime later banned all international flights into and out of Nigeria effective 23 March 2020. By then, many returnees had already melted into the communities.

**Health Care System:** Nigeria has a very poor doctor to patients ratio of 4 doctors to 10,000 patients, worsening daily because doctors, including the newly graduated ones, continue to emigrate to Europe, North America, the Middle East, etc. at the slightest opportunity (compare this to the UK – 26:10000, or the US – 24: 10,000).

All these are pointers to the fact that Nigeria’s health sector has suffered from gross underfunding that has led to the poor state of the infrastructure, poor remuneration and avoidable brain-drain (over 5,000 registered Nigerian doctors practice in the UK alone). The thought of the horrid state of Nigerian hospitals sends jitters down the spines of the ruling class; now that they, like the masses, would have to contend with this reality on the ground, as the option of medical tourism closed to them for now.

**Social:**

Things have gone downhill since the Covid-19 broke out in Nigeria. Apart from the dire state of the healthcare system, 69 million Nigerians have no access to clean water. This invariably leads to water-borne diseases which continue to break out as regular epidemics. Social distancing and self-isolation presuppose that people have enough space. In Lagos where there are over 100 slum areas, about 80 people can be found sharing a 10-room building with only two toilets and a bathroom being shared by all with no pipe-borne or treated water readily available.

And the country's unemployment rate, already at 23 percent, is expected to climb even higher. The Government has announced a total lockdown of Lagos and Abuja. In the event of more cases, tougher measures will likely follow.

**Recommendations:**
 Nigeria can combat the corona virus epidemic in different ways:

* The novel coronavirus is ‘new’ and health care professionals need to learn more about it nearly every day. Meetings should be held daily to review the situation globally, assess the risk of spread and improve on Nigeria’s level of preparedness based on new findings and insights.
* At the points of entry, screening should be heightened, particularly for passengers coming from China. This includes temperature checks, specific questions on known symptoms of the novel coronavirus and travel history.
* I suggest that Nigeria completes the training of rapid response teams in all states in Nigeria. All 36 states should have a team ready to be deployed in the event of an outbreak.
* Government must also distribute foodstuff and domestic essentials to the poor masses to cushion the effect of the lockdown.
* The Nigerian government should also carry out public enlightment activities and set up effective policies.

**Sources/ Appendices:**• https://www.marxist.com/the-impact-on-nigeria-of-the-coronavirus-pandemic-socioeconomic-pandemonium.htm
• https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/04/coronavirus-fallout-imf-nigeria-economy-shrink-3-4-200416073214680.html
• https://qz.com/africa/1821361/coronavirus-lagos-nigeria-shuts-schools-ban-public-gatherings/amp/
• http://cseaafrica.org/the-implication-of-covid19-on-the-nigerian-economy/
• https://theconversation.com/amp/steps-nigeria-is-taking-to-prepare-for-cases-of-coronavirus-130704