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**What is a coronavirus?**

The coronavirus family causes illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), according to the WHO. They circulate in animals and some can be transmitted between animals and humans. Several coronaviruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans. The new coronavirus, the seventh known to affect humans, has been named COVID-19.

## What are the symptoms?

Common signs of infection include fever, coughing and breathing difficulties. In severe cases, it can cause pneumonia, multiple organ failure and death. The incubation period of COVID-19 is thought to be between one and 14 days. It is contagious before symptoms appear which is why so many people get infected. Infected patients can be also asymptomatic, meaning they do not display any symptoms despite having the virus in their systems.

## Where did it originate from?

China alerted the WHO to cases of unusual pneumonia in Wuhan on December 31st,2019 but on January 30th,2020 WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global health emergency.COVID-19 is thought to have originated in a seafood market where wildlife was sold illegally. On February 7, Chinese researchers said the virus could have spread from an infected animal to humans through illegally trafficked pangolins, prized in Asia for food and medicine. Scientists have pointed to either bats or snakes as possible sources.

## How to protect oneself?

The WHO declared the virus a pandemic on March 11 and said it was "deeply concerned by the alarming levels of spread and severity" of the outbreak.

The WHO recommends basic hygiene such as regularly washing hands with soap and water, and covering your mouth with your elbow when sneezing or coughing. Maintain "social distancing" - keeping at least 1.8 metres (six feet) between yourself and others - particularly if they are coughing and sneezing, and avoid touching your face, eyes and mouth with unwashed hands. Avoid unnecessary, unprotected contact with animals and be sure to thoroughly wash hands after contact.

**Effects of the lockdown and restrictions on Nigerians.**

**Mortality rate**: Due to the fact that no vaccine has been made, there is no cure to this pandemic, people are made to take preventive measures only, those infected are isolated with no hope very recover and a very large number of them eventually die.

**Strain on the nation’s economy**: This pandemic has put the world on a total lockdown to prevent it from further spread as such workers and labourers have been stopped from their work and all form of economic activities have been brought to a halt. Both large scale and small scale economics are being affected .

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**Increased hunger rate**: However, locking people down at home in the Nigerian context is like asking people to go hungry for the duration of the lockdown. More than 60 per cent of Nigerians survive on daily pay from menial jobs and petty trading. A lockdown means their means of daily livelihood have been locked down. The plight of private sector employees is no better. Many private employers have maintained a ‘no salary during lockdown’ stance, or at best a 50 per cent pay cut. Some have even completely laid the workers off. Labour must agitate for full pay for workers, whether private or government employed, for as long as the lockdown lasts. Government must also distribute foodstuff and domestic essentials to the poor masses to cushion the effect of the lockdown.

Subsequently, pangs of hunger will lead to widespread anger. Protests in different forms are already being seen within the communities. People are protesting against a lockdown without palliatives, against the high-handedness of law enforcement agents, and even rejecting all manner of palliatives that smack of insult to their intelligence, such as packs of food that are not enough to feed a family of six in 2 weeks being distributed to be shared among 60-80 families in a cluster. This protest mood that is brewing has the potential to transform into a movement that would pose a serious challenge to the lockdown if the hunger question is not resolved.

This is a crisis like no other, and there is substantial uncertainty about its impact on people’s lives and livelihoods. A lot depends on the epidemiology of the virus, the effectiveness of containment measures, and the development of therapeutics and vaccines, all of which are hard to predict. In addition, many countries now face multiple crises—a health crisis, a financial crisis, and a collapse in commodity prices, which interact in complex ways. Policymakers are providing unprecedented support to households, firms, and financial markets, and, while this is crucial for a strong recovery, there is considerable uncertainty about what the economic landscape will look like when we emerge from this lockdown.

Reference: Huang c, Wang Y,at al. Clinical features of parents infected with 2019 novel cornavirus in Wuhan, china. The luncet 2020.