

Clearly the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) that started out as an epidemic in Huanan, China in December 2019 and ended up as a pandemic (affecting the whole world) has thrown the whole world into chaos. Health systems in most countries are overpowered by seriously sick patients. Global and local economies are declining; the world economy is now declared to be in recession by the World Bank and could eventually lead to a depression.

Nigeria, which is the most populous country in Africa has recorded over 1,000 cases of COVID-19 as of April 2020. These numbers are, however, far from the true 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 no really preparation to arrest the earliest cases of COVID-19 in the country which could have been done at the points of entry into the country, especially at the international airports and effective quarantine of travellers coming into the country as well.

It was not until later, by March 2020 that Nigeria eventually placed a travel ban on countries with high incidence of the disease and later banned all international flights into and out of Nigeria. As parts of the scheme to curtail



COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government ordered a lockdown on Lagos, Ogun and the FCT Abuja. Many other states are already applying one stay-at-home rule or the other up to state boundaries closure.

However, locking people down at home in Nigeria is like asking people to go hungry for the duration of the lockdown. More than 60% of Nigerians survive from daily pay on menial jobs and petty trading. The plight of private sector employees is no better as many private employers have maintained a 'no salary during lockdown' stance or at best a 50% pay. Schools have been closed down and businesses are deteriorating. People are protesting against the lockdown, as a widespread number of Nigerians are suffering from hunger. In places like Ogun and Lagos, youths, pushed to extreme hunger by the lockdown go on mass looting of shops and houses.

While the poor masses, a majority of whom are informal workers, are asked to stay off their businesses and sit at home, exceptions are proudly being granted to members of the ruling class and the billionaire class. This is quite unfair to the masses and hypocrisy of the politicians in government. The multi-million naira donations is enough to cater for the society during this lockdown if equitably distributed without bias.