

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.

Are COVID-19 cases declining in Nigeria?

The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has warned that though the country has recorded a decline in the number of COVID-19 cases, it was not so significant as Nigeria has not tested adequately and therefore risks a resurgence.

Nigeria recorded a 36% national decline in cases in August compared to July, while the positivity ratio dropped from 20 per cent in June to 7 per cent in July. However, the only states that can confidently predict a decline in cases are Lagos and Kano, as well as the FCT, because they have tested high numbers, but the same cannot be said at the National level because some states are not testing.

The NCDC stated that they could not make any interpretation on the data in Taraba, Adamawa, Kogi, Nasarawa, Niger, Kebbi, Zamfara, Jigawa and Yobe States because they do not have enough data coming out of these states to ascertain if they are improving or not or where exactly they are.

Some countries that had earlier seen a decline in cases are beginning to see a resurgence, such as England, France, Ukraine, Israel and the Czech Republic. Therefore, it is important that we continue to take measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria such as by wearing masks, practicing physical distancing measures and maintaining good hygiene.

Schools Reopening

Are COVID-19 cases declining in Nigeria?

The Federal Government of Nigeria has permitted the reopening of schools nationwide and asked state governments to decide when and how to allow the reopening of schools.

In addition to this, the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 has disclosed that it released 1 billion Naira each to 32 state governments for the purposes of driving the COVID-19 response; however, the benefitting states were not named.

Here are the states that have disclosed their resumption plans:

S/N	State	Resumption date	Schools affected
1	Lagos	August 4	Exit classes
		September 14	Tertiary institutions
		September 21	Primary and Secondary
2	Osun	August 4	Exit classes
		September 21	Primary and Secondary
3	Oyo	August 4	Exit classes
		September 21	Primary and Secondary
			Tertiary
4	Ogun	August 4	Exit classes
5	Ondo	August 4	Exit classes
6	Ekiti	August 4	Exit classes
7	Bayelsa	September 7	Primary 6
		August 4	Exit classes
8	Delta	August 4	SS3
		September 8	JSS3
		September 16	Primary 6
		September 21	Tertiary
9	Rivers	August 4	Exit classes
		September 14	Primary, Secondary and Tertiary
10	Kogi	September 14	Primary, Secondary and Tertiary
11	Benue	August 4	Exit classes
12	Niger	August 4	Exit classes
13	Kwara	August 4	Exit classes
14	Abuja-FCT	August 4	Exit classes (Secondary and Tertiary)

RUMOURS



Antiretroviral drugs can be used to prevent or cure COVID-19

COVID-19 is a plague from God

Everyone with COVID-19 dies

You have to be with someone for 10 minutes to catch the coronavirus

The outbreak began because people ate bat soup

VS



FACTS

There is no scientific evidence to validate the use of antiretroviral drugs against the virus. Studies have shown that drugs like Lopinavir and Ritonavir had no benefit in terms of clinical improvement or viral clearance.

Some Nigerians have concluded that the novel coronavirus is a plague sent to punish politicians and the elite. However, the virus is no respecter of social class or profession, and is dangerous to all.

COVID-19 is only fatal for a small percentage of people. In a report, the Chinese CDC concluded that 80.9% of COVID-19 cases were mild. The WHO also report that around 80% of people will experience a relatively mild form of the disease, which will not require specialist treatment in a hospital.

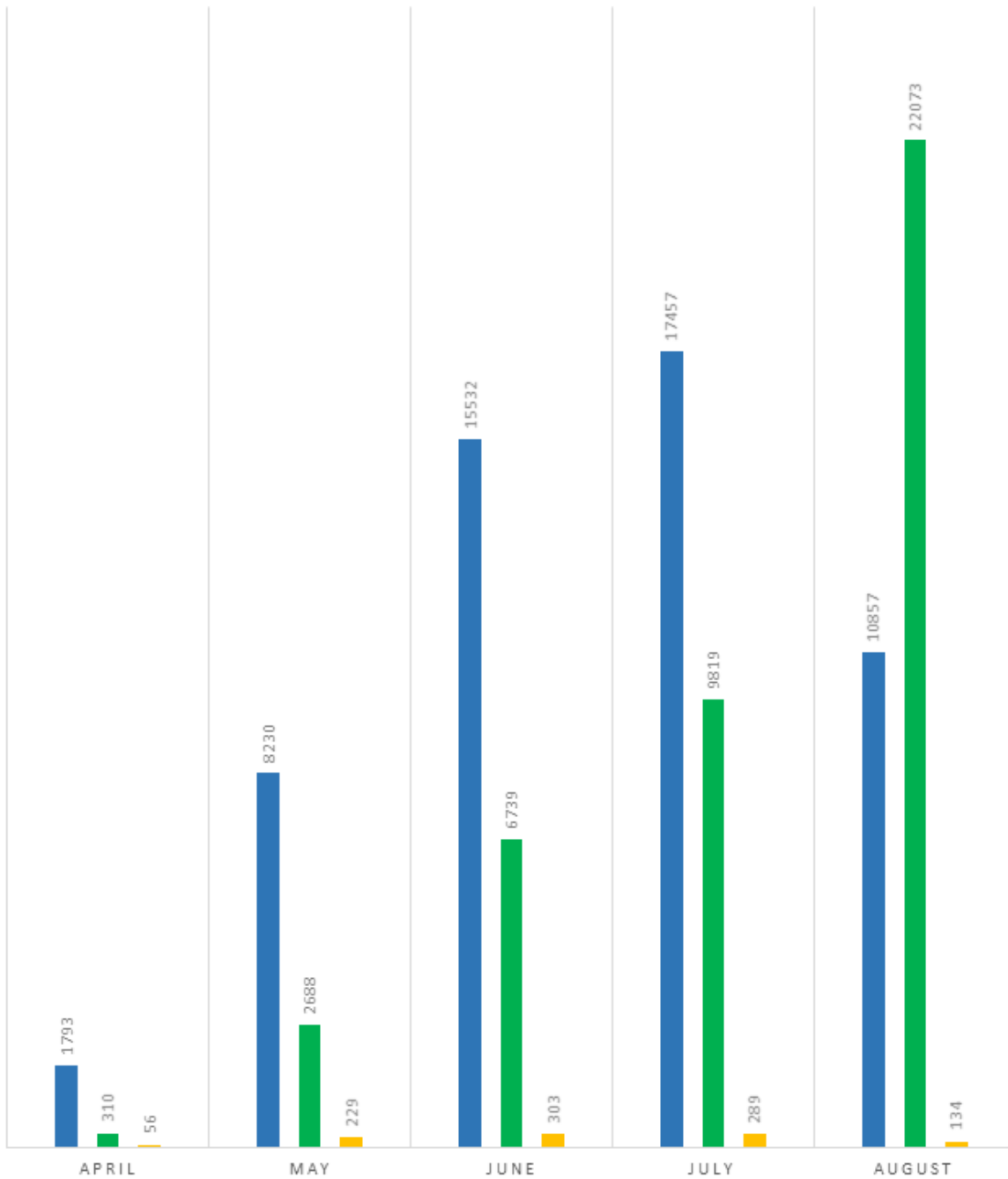
The longer someone is with a person who has it, the more likely they are to catch the virus themselves, but it is still possible to catch it in under 10 minutes.

Although scientists are confident that the virus started in animals, there is no evidence to suggest that it came from soup of any kind.

COVID-19 monthly case chart

COVID 19 CASES BY MONTH (APRIL - AUGUST, 2020)

■ Cases ■ Recoveries ■ Deaths



CORONAVIRUS UPDATE IN NIGERIA AT AS TODAY - 23/09/2020

57,724

CONFIRMED CASES

1,102

DEATHS

48,985

RECOVERED

494,577

TESTED