



# **LADY HELEN CHILD HEALTH FOUNDATION - ZOOM SUMMIT -**

*THEME*

***THE IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON CHILDREN AND FAMILY IN  
NIGERIA - NAVIGATING THE SOLUTIONS.***

***PRESENTED BY:  
AMB. NGOZI-ANIH GEORGE  
(FOUNDER/DIRECTOR FACADO ORPHANAGE  
HOME, NIGERIA)***

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# **THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN ESPECIALLY IN ORPHANAGES**

# Introduction



The number of vulnerable children has increased in recent times before the advent of COVID-19. This was as a result of poverty, crises in some regions which led to death of many adults, thus an increase in the number of orphans.

Among other impacts, COVID-19 has caused increase in poverty, which has resulted to an increase in child labour. Many households try to survive using every available means. Some even send their wards to hawk.

To narrow it down to the effect on children in orphanages, when there is poverty in the society, the children living under charity suffer.

Most orphanages just like many households experienced hunger. There were little to no orphanage visits/supports.

# TRENDS



Presently, prices of essential commodities have gone up and it has become very difficult for most orphanages to cope. Cost of food items like rice, beans, semovita, crayfish etc., even beverages are very high now. Fuel and electricity tariffs are very high.

If households with four children are struggling to survive, what about orphanages with many children? Children don't know if there is money or not, if the cost of food items have gone up or not, they demand for food anytime they are hungry and cry if not given immediately.

Many individuals tried to capitalize on this need to cheat orphanages. They come to orphanages and pose to assist, collect documents of the orphanages that they will get food items from some Government agencies but they never did.

# Areas where Support is needed



Orphanages really need support in these areas –

1. Food items.
2. Educational support – school fees, books, computers.
3. Cash for salaries and home upkeep especially fueling and electricity bill.

Orphanages submit report monthly to relevant authorities, and Government should use these records to support the great work orphanages are doing.

# PLEAS



1. Electricity should be provided for free to all orphanages. Why should the children in the orphanage stay in darkness when there is no money available to recharge?
2. The government and well-meaning individuals are supposed to give educational support to these children in the home, pay their school fees and buy them books.
3. Grants should be given to orphanage homes to help them establish a viable business that can support the home.
4. Medication should be free for orphans. Why should an orphan die because there is no money for treatment?
5. We heard of survival funds but this did not get to orphanages.

**THE RIGHTS OF THESE CHILDREN MUST BE PROTECTED!**

# WHAT IS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT OF COVID 19 TO CHILDREN?



Children are living in fear of death daily. Every day on television, you see tens of people dead, and the number of death keep rising. The children are worried and living in anxiety thinking of who will be the next COVID victim.

The closure of school also affected the children greatly. Not only is learning hindered but also the alternative to classroom teaching which is online learning is not accessible to them.

They miss their friends so much as they are indoors 24 hours, no school, no church, no outing of any kind, no social support that contributes to their mental wellbeing. With the lockdown, all family members are staying in the house morning to evening.



# WHAT IS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT OF COVID 19 TO CHILDREN? – Cont.



Many girls were sexually harassed by their fathers or uncles. But for orphanages like FACADO, privacy with the opposite sex is not allowed and such does not happen.

I just got news last week of a girl in SS2 who just tested positive for pregnancy {already 4 months pregnant}. This happened during the lock down, as a result of staying at home, without trusted adult supervision. The girl was impregnated by her cousin brother.

I inculcate freedom of speech in our female children that they can report anybody who violates the rules and make sexual advances on them whether staff or not.



# CONCLUSION



Global study revealed that for the deprived children like children in orphanages, the effect of this pandemic could be devastating and life-altering. Thus, all hands should be on deck to support orphanages that have good vision.

God bless us all.

**THANK YOU**