



Date of Publication: April 6, 2020

Author(s): | Gertrude Masembe |

Title: Survival for the fittest - the game plan for time of Crisis

I must say many issues surrounding the COVID-19 took us by surprise though its existence had been made known to the world when first index cases were confirmed in China followed by deaths. In Uganda we know this pandemic originated from China and spread to other countries. Before the COVID-19 era, Uganda seemed to be on a progressive road to success as far as tackling poverty issues was concerned given various government efforts in place. Additionally, new businesses were springing up with many people especially the youth preferring to move to urban areas and exchanging land for other opportunities most notably Boda boda businesses or travel to Dubai for contract work.

The country night spots depicted lots of what our youths' life style was about who make up over 50% of the country's population. Partying and socializing were part of their game until the deadly pandemic now commonly known as COVID-19 set in. The pandemic forced many countries to declare a state of emergency for their nations and unfortunately its modes of infection didn't at all favour the current lifestyles of the population necessitating social distancing among other things as a vital measure to curb the spread. This later culminated into the country's lock down resulting into loss of jobs, workers enjoying unpaid leaves and stalling of income generating activities, the people's major source of livelihood.

It is factual, that my country is not much different from other low-income countries where majority of the population live from hand to mouth with no insurance plans in place and tangible savings to last a season. This means they have nothing to fall back to during periods of prolonged crises like the ongoing lock down and illness. It's for this reason that public outcries regarding lack of food and basic needs have been made four (4) days into the lock down attracting the attention of the President. Though a temporary measure has been put in place to give supplies to specified groupings, we still need to sit back and observe how long large families can cope with these provisions. Food supplies are going to benefit the old, sick, lactating mothers and taxi drivers who will each receive 6 kilograms of maize flour, 3 kilograms of beans and half kilo of salt. Lactating mothers and the sick will in addition get 2 kilograms of milk and sugar.

The distribution has already started in one of the city suburbs as first beneficiaries, a slum area littered with small houses to accommodate low income earners. These have vowed to ration their food just to be sure shortages are a non occurrence before the lock down is lifted while others remain optimistic that supplies will keep them before hunger becomes another emergency in their homes.

However, something actually interesting is that even the middle income people with vehicles in their compounds want to be part of this government' kind gesture. Let's be considerate my fellow citizens, sometimes issues of priority have to come into play and this is surely one of those moments.