

My Experience of COVID-19 Measures and My Coping Measures
By Dr. Monica Kansime, KASEA Uganda (Scholarship for Master in Agricultural Economics, until 2004, Makerere U)
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My hand stitched dress

The COVID-19 virus first appeared in the Hubei province of China in December 2019, and by then the realities of it almost looked far off for most of us. Despite its late arrival, the virus rapidly spread across Africa, the news of which were have been received with mixed feelings and perceptions. In Kenya, the first case was reported on 14th March 2020, just a day before my planned travel home (Uganda) for a one-week break. I am working in Nairobi for an NGO called CABI in (Centre for Agriculture on Biosciences International). Since I am working away from home, I have a routine to take time off to meet with my family especially my ailing grandmother who needs to feel the warmth of her grandchildren. However, this time the situation was different as I was 'forced' to return to Nairobi when they started announcing near lockdown measures. Since I had returned from 'abroad', I was expected to do a 14-day self-quarantine. I did not step out of the house for the entire duration, I restricted my family members from going out, such that in the worst-case scenario of an infection, it can be traced only to my family. God saw us through the 14-days,

that were unfortunately characterised by paranoia.

Several weeks on, Kenya is still in a partial lockdown with restricted movements, limited social gatherings, and curfew from 7pm to 5am. We have had to learn to buy everything on line, including food that is delivered to the door step. The children have been engaged through online classes, to the extent possible. I feel I have additional time since I don't have to spend hours in traffic jam to and from work (those who have been to Nairobi you will understand this), and all my weekends are spent in the house. I have used this time to be a bit more creative, attend online courses about business survival, and rekindle my hobbies. One of the things I have done that amazed me as well was when I hand stitched for myself a dress from zero. I have also tried out cooking various recipes for myself and children. Career wise, I have written more research articles than I would in an ordinary time, or may be because it's the only feasible activity right now. I launched an online study on effects of COVID-19 on food security in East Africa that received an incredible 460 responses within seven days. I therefore feel that not all is lost, some good things have happened despite the challenges. We continue to remember those who have been negatively affected by this pandemic, and pray that God comforts them.