

# COVID 19 CHALLENGES OF A SOCIETY

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR CAMEROONIANS

Lawong Ayeni Gilbert (Medical Doctor/Surgeon)

Stand:06.04.2021

### CONTENTS

Introduction .....	2
Aim and objectives of this paper .....	2
Believe in the existence of the Virus .....	3
Does there exist the virus? .....	3
What is this virus? .....	3
Was the Virus manufactured in Wuhan/China? .....	3
HOW CAN YOU CATCH NOVEL CORONAVIRUS? .....	3
Is there any Artificial intelligence in the Coronavirus? .....	4
Is COVID 19 a new Bio-Weapon? .....	4
Demographic Impact of the COVID Pandemic .....	4
People have died in Europe of the COVID. I think that we have seen less people dying of the COVID in Cameroon. Is that true and if yes, why is it that way? .....	4
How many people have died of COVID 19? .....	4
Who are the most affected of the COVID? .....	5
Which people die for COVID? .....	5
What has the COVID got to do with Solidarity in our society? .....	5
Weather we wear masks or not, are we not equally going to be infected at last? .....	6
Prevention .....	6
What are the effective preventive measures against contamination with the virus? .....	6
How do we carry the face mask rightly? .....	6
Must we have a FFP 2 mask to stop transmission? .....	6
What if we have neither the FFP 2 nor the normal medical mask? .....	7
What happens when we carry masks on our chins? .....	7
Why do children not also use the masks? .....	7
We have been going without the masks since the pandemic started and nothing has happened, why do we embarck on the wearing of face masks now? .....	7
What is the difference between washing of hands and hand sanitization? .....	8

Why do many not more talk of hand sanitization in this second wave of the pandemic? .	8
If I wear the mask, can I still be infected?.....	8
The vaccination.....	9
What vaccines do we have against COVID 19?.....	9
How do the vaccines work? .....	9
What about vaccines made only for Africa? .....	9
We hear of the side effects like venous thrombosis with the Astra Zeneca vaccine. What do you think about that? .....	10
Can I be infected in the hospital, when I go for testing? .....	10
Can the COVID be cured? .....	10
Just wondering if those who had tested positive of COVID-19 some times are not being given the vaccine because of the shortage. And if yes, what about those who are being reinfected, any idea?.....	10
Conclusion .....	11
Sources.....	11

## INTRODUCTION

It is one year since the COVID 19 pandemic spread all over the entire World. We have since then seen limitation of daily life, economies have been and are still threatened. The challenges for health institutions and the health of populations all over the world have been overwhelming. In the first wave in March-April 2020, Cameroon and other African Countries were not hardly hit. Early 2021, these countries observe a rapid rise in the numbers of persons infected. This comes at a time, when many people have relaxed and most of the lock down measures had been stopped.

Following popular and social media, there have been very many view, theories and other statements that are not based on facts. This makes it difficult for anyone to know what is right and what is wrong. This confusion could also be observed among some authorities in some countries. The great negative effect is the fact that it public sensitization and education becomes very difficult.

We cannot sit and wait until the problem solves itself.

## AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS PAPER

1. Information and education of the Cameroonian public on the COVID-19 using simple language and validated (proven) facts.
2. Clarifying doubts about the COVID pandemic
3. Information and Education on aspects of Vaccination against the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

This paper will present the information in a question-and-answer format and grouped in subtopics. In case more questions arise through reading this or other information, readers are motivated to file in their questions to: fama12@gmx.de

## BELIEVE IN THE EXISTENCE OF THE VIRUS

---

### DOES THERE EXIST THE VIRUS?

The Coronavirus has been traced back to a town in China called Wuhan. There and elsewhere in the World, the virus could be identified through medical tests. It can also be differentiated from other viruses that we know.

Some people believe that COVID 19 is just like a normal flu. They further say Governments with the COVID are looking for means to limit the freedom of their citizens.

Economies are almost collapsing under the COVID pandemic. It is not logical that the economies be put under stress and should collapse, reducing state revenue and the countries should have an interest in that.

### WHAT IS THIS VIRUS?

Novel coronavirus, also known as 2019-nCoV, is a type of virus that causes respiratory illness. This may lead to infection of the lung: pneumonia (popularly called “**nemonia**”). There are many kinds of lung infection with different grades of severity. The COVID 19 is highly contagious and very deadly.

### WAS THE VIRUS MANUFACTURED IN WUHAN/CHINA?

Information from sources in Wuhan, where the virus was first detected in human beings say that the first people that were infected had visited a Wholesale Seafood Market in Wuhan City, where seafood, wild, and farmed animal species were sold (1). Either the virus was transmitted from an animal to a human being or from an already infected person on the market day to others. Today, no one knows exactly, where the virus came from. There is not evidence, that the virus was manufactured in a laboratory.

### HOW CAN YOU CATCH NOVEL CORONAVIRUS?

You may catch the virus by:

- Breathing in droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze.
- Touching something, like a table or a doorknob, that was exposed to the virus (contaminated) and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.
- Being around animals that carry the virus, or eating uncooked or undercooked meat or animal products that contain the virus.

---

## IS THERE ANY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE CORONAVIRUS?

No. At the beginning of the pandemic, many people talked and read of the theory that the coronavirus was designed, so that chips could be made and inserted into a virus, that the world needs. Those who are vaccinated would then be driven by remote control. Some people went as far as saying that it is a plan of Bill Gates (owner of Microsoft).

If that were the case, the Vaccine would already have been designed before letting people be infected. It was an independent effort of many firms around the World, that have independent from one another developed different vaccines. These firms do not belong to Bill Gates and the vaccines are not of the same type. There is no logical reasoning that makes it possible for one individual to want to control the world population of close to 8 Billion with a remote control.

---

## IS COVID 19 A NEW BIO-WEAPON?

Many people around the world believe that the Virus was manufactured in a high technology laboratory as a bio-weapon. In this case, it should be a weapon to kill the entire World. Until now, there is no serious evidence that the virus was manufactured and People at the reported market in Wuhan, where the first patients showed symptoms have not been reported to have worked in a laboratory as many of them were simple market people.

Should the COVID be seen as a bio-weapon, then the coming of the vaccine should be seen as a solution to the war!

## DEMOGRAPHIC IMPACT OF THE COVID PANDEMIC

---

PEOPLE HAVE DIED IN EUROPE OF THE COVID. I THINK THAT WE HAVE SEEN LESS PEOPLE DYING OF THE COVID IN CAMEROON. IS THAT TRUE AND IF YES, WHY IS IT THAT WAY?

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE DIED OF COVID 19?

As of 05<sup>th</sup>. April 2021, 2.850.521 people have died of COVID.

We must know that we are talking of those who were tested and registered. In many countries, there is no testing and many people would still die of COVID and no one knows.

We must know that this number who died already corresponds to by far more than the entire population of the North West Region of Cameroon (last figure: 2.378.489; Stand 2016)

---

## WHO ARE THE MOST AFFECTED OF THE COVID?

When contaminated, the older people and people with existing health problems like hypertension, cardiac diseases, diabetes, chronic airway diseases, HIV and other chronic infectious diseases are likely to develop the symptoms and many of those of these two groups, who are infected have a higher chance of dying because of COVID 19.

---

## WHICH PEOPLE DIE FOR COVID?

The old and those with preexisting diseases of the cardiovascular system, hypertension, chronic diseases of the lungs, Diabetes mellitus, HIV and some other chronic infectious diseases like Tuberculosis.

In the statistics derived from many highly affected Countries, of all infected persons more than 80 % of those who die of the COVID-19 are older than 70 years.

In the USA, 80,6 % of those who die of COVID are older than 65 years. 16,9 % are between 45 and 64 years of age. This implies that only 2,5 % of all deaths observed for COVID in the USA are below 45 years of age(9).

In Germany, a similar picture was observed. At week 47 of the pandemic 87 % of those who died of COVID were 70 years and above. It is worth remarking, that this age group constitutes only 13 % of all, who were diagnosed of COVID-19. This is a reason enough to reinforce preventive measures in solidarity with our parents and grandparents. (8)

Comparing with other countries, the picture is similar.

---

## WHAT HAS THE COVID GOT TO DO WITH SOLIDARITY IN OUR SOCIETY?

Solidarity means that each individual in the society does not only take care of their business. Given the fact that we are social beings, each and everyone has their strengths and weaknesses. They have their roles to play, so that the society as a whole keeps together. Among us, there are people blessed with many privileges and some with disabilities, health and mental problems, poverty and other hindrances. In social community, particularly in times of hardship, we have to hold together, see one another and value them as they are, so that we all together overcome the challenges.

During the COVID pandemic, we know that the (vulnerable); the old and those with pre-existing health conditions, are highly in danger of getting ill and even dying, if they get infected. On the other hand, we know that children, young and immune competent members of the society may even get the virus and will not develop symptoms. If the young and healthy do not consider the vulnerable and show solidarity, they would catch the virus and bring it home to them to infect them and put their health in danger.

In solidarity, even those who are young and fit must observe the preventive measures for the sake of the vulnerable.

---

## WEATHER WE WEAR MASKS OR NOT, ARE WE NOT EQUALLY GOING TO BE INFECTED AT LAST?

The essence of wearing masks is not to keep doing so for the rest of our lives. The main aim is to keep the numbers of people infected and affected by the COVID as low as possible, while waiting for the lone real rescue, that of vaccination. Once a majority of the population (particularly the vulnerable) is vaccinated, there will be more freedom and no need to wear the masks again.

At the moment, we in Cameroon have not yet got the vaccine, because even in Countries, where it is produced still have scarcity of the vaccine. Despite the scarcity of the vaccine and considering the fact that all producing firms are doing their best to increase production, we in Cameroon must lobby for getting the vaccination to Cameroon as soon as possible and to vaccinate giving priority to the vulnerable (Above 70 years of age and people with preexisting diseases)

Caring less about the masks and not minding the preventive measures means giving up and being indifferent in a problem, where there is a way out. We do not need to surrender, but to be optimistic and together prevail in the fight against the COVID pandemic.

## PREVENTION

---

### WHAT ARE THE EFFECTIVE PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST CONTAMINATION WITH THE VIRUS?

- Stay home as much as possible and stay 2 m away from people you encounter
- Avoid groups of 5 or more people, consider other means of communication. If you must go to gatherings, observe distancing
- Wash your hands with water and soap many times a day
- Use a face mask (may be made by local tailors) if you must travel and have the chance to come in contact with infected persons
- Report to health institutions via telephone, if you think you are infected. Follow their recommendations.
- Do not infect others, if you are infected.
- If you are infected, keep the quarantine of 14 days for the good of other people in your community.

---

### HOW DO WE CARRY THE FACE MASK RIGHTLY?

The mask should close both the mouth and the nose and be tied tightly for air and drops not to have a chance to get in contact with your mouth or nose.

---

### MUST WE HAVE A FFP 2 MASK TO STOP TRANSMISSION?

No, Keeping the stated measures and using a simple face mask as stated in the next question will also help to stop the spread of the Coronavirus.

---

## WHAT IF WE HAVE NEITHER THE FFP 2 NOR THE NORMAL MEDICAL MASK?

Given that the mask is a mechanical barrier, an ineffective mask is better than no mask. Given the condition in Cameroon, one can still use a mask that has been locally made by a tailor. In that case, the mask should be well made with a wool material in double layer and should be washed regularly.

---

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE CARRY MASKS ON OUR CHINS?

We can still inhale the virus through the mouth or the nose, since the mask on the chin does not cover the mouth and nose.

---

## WHY DO CHILDREN NOT ALSO USE THE MASKS?

Children who are able to reason and understand the measure and who do not have problems breathing with the mask on should be encouraged to do so. We as a society should however not force very young children to wear masks as this may have a negative impact on their physical and psychological health.

---

## WE HAVE BEEN GOING WITHOUT THE MASKS SINCE THE PANDEMIC STARTED AND NOTHING HAS HAPPENED, WHY DO WE EMBARRASS ON THE WEARING OF FACE MASKS NOW?

At the beginning of the pandemic masks among other preventive measures of the pandemic were propagated and some people consequently put on their masks. With time, against expectation, Cameroon witnessed that no many people died of the COVID. Some people were of the impression that the COVID does not exist, so many people stopped wearing the masks.

In the current wave of the pandemic, it is evident that by far, many more people are getting severely sick of COVID and the spread is more than in the first wave. In Cameroon however, there are no studies why try to explain why this time many more people get infected and ill. Reasons could be:

- Maybe there exists mutations of the virus that are stronger in causing the disease and severe illness. In Europe this is experienced in the mutant (changed form of the original virus) that was first observed in Great Britain. There is similar observation in mutants from South Africa and Brazil.
- The rate of movement is less than in Europe, so that conveying the virus from one community to the next may happen slowly.
- There is more testing for the virus in Cameroon now than during the first wave. If this were the only reason however, we would expect that the same number of people dying of COVID would have been the same during the first wave.
- Other factors that are not known.

---

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WASHING OF HANDS AND HAND SANITIZATION?

Sanitizers are made of chemical solutions that kill viruses and bacteria. These kind of sanitizers are termed virucide and bactericide.

There are also sanitizers that stop the multiplication of viruses and bacteria. They are called bacteriostatic and virustatic. Some sanitizers however do not have an effect on viruses.

When buying a sanitizer, we must know their function. The best ones against the Coronavirus should be virucidal

The Coronavirus derives its name from a protein layer on its surface, which we all have soon on all the pictures of the virus. When we wash hands with soap, the soap has the capacity of destroying this surface protein of the virus. Without this surface, the virus cannot survive and cannot cause any disease.

Given the fact that Savon is available all over and water can also attainable, if we keep to washing of hands, this would be as effective as sanitizing, given that the sanitizer has to be bought for more than the soap.

---

## WHY DO MANY NOT MORE TALK OF HAND SANITIZATION IN THIS SECOND WAVE OF THE PANDEMIC?

Hand sanitization functions and is very effective if used rightly. For many people, it is costly and since they cannot afford for it, they have not been using it.

Compared to washing of hands, sanitization has the advantage that it is easily taken along no matter where we go. For washing of hands, there must be soap, water and an extra container to wash hands.

If you can get a sanitizer, it is advisable using it too.

Those who can afford to practice hand washing and sanitization are optimal. That is however not a MUST.

---

## IF I WEAR THE MASK, CAN I STILL BE INFECTED?

The mask is a mechanical barrier stopping us from inhaling the viral particles that in contact with our mouth, nose and airways causes the disease.

If you wear a mask and keep manipulation with the hands that have not been cleaned and have been contaminated, you can still get infected.

Moreover, if you wear a mask wrongly, covering the chin or only the mouth, you can still inhale the virus and be contaminated.

## THE VACCINATION

---

### WHAT VACCINES DO WE HAVE AGAINST COVID 19?

Currently there are vaccines produced and have been approved for use in various countries.

- BioNTech/Pfizer, a German-American venture.
- Moderna, an American firm,
- Astra Zeneca an English-Swedish firm
- Johnson & Johnson, an American firm
- Sputnik 5, a Russian production,
- Sinovac Biotech, a Chinese firm.

---

### HOW DO THE VACCINES WORK?

The vaccine functions like this: It makes our body think that it is infected by the virus, so the immune system starts to work against it and build the same antibodies like it would do against the real virus. The vaccine however is not making us ill and not killing anybody. Once you have the antibody, you are safe.

This kind of vaccine is called active vaccine. In a similar way, the Tetanus vaccine which is given to children after birth and repeated several times in our life is an active vaccine that makes the body also produce antibodies against the germ that causes tetanus.

Due to the effectiveness of Tetanus vaccine, none of us have ever seen a patient with Tetanus. If one is not vaccinated and gets Tetanus (and the bacterium is almost everywhere), they would hardly survive.

Those tested positive and who survive do not need the vaccine because they already have the antibodies (immunization).

---

### WHAT ABOUT VACCINES MADE ONLY FOR AFRICA?

According to international patent laws, when firms do research and discover medication or vaccines for example, they register a patent and are the only ones allowed to produce this vaccine or medication for some years before the method is exposed to other firms to do production. During this period, the said firms can negotiate with partners to produce the very medications or vaccines in mostly low- and middle-income countries, where the cost of production are reduced. The partners accept to sell their products only to specific Countries with reduced buying power. Should these products compete with the ones from the original firm with the patent in the international market in rich Countries, this would be to the loss of the firm holding the patent.

For many medications and vaccines these are deals that are made, so as to assure supply of poor countries with important medicines and vaccines among other things.

---

## WE HEAR OF THE SIDE EFFECTS LIKE VENOUS THROMBOSIS WITH THE ASTRA ZENECA VACCINE. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT?

Thrombosis means blood clotting, this has been observed in some individuals who were vaccinated with the Astra Zeneca Vaccine, however, the number of patients who got it (13 out of 1,600,000 vaccinated) (2) is by far less than the number that would get infected and die or have to live with life-long complications if they never got the vaccine. This figure corresponds to 0,008% of getting the thrombosis after vaccination with Astra Zeneca vaccine.

In my opinion, the risk is worth bearing to take the Astra Zeneca vaccine.

---

## CAN I BE INFECTED IN THE HOSPITAL, WHEN I GO FOR TESTING?

Normally the personnel in health institutions should be well educated and be role models in preventive measures against the COVID. If they take care, you will not be infected. Even in the health institutions, everyone still needs to keep to the preventive measures.

If all measures are observed, you will not be infected in the hospital, when you go for testing.

---

## CAN THE COVID BE CURED?

Until now, no medication has proven to cure against COVID. All what health institutions do is to take care of symptoms and support the human body to fight the virus. If you have difficulties in breathing for example, you are given oxygen, and in some countries have artificial ventilation by a machine. People have taken various measure, like the solution of Mgr. Kleda, Remdesivir, Ibuprofen and a lot other medications and have been well. This does not mean that the virus was killed in their bodies, but that their bodies were supported by the various medications to succeed in the fight against COVID. For mild cases, this is good, knowing that the vulnerable population would get the medications and a majority would still die, it is very important to take to preventive measures and get vaccinated, when time comes.

---

## JUST WONDERING IF THOSE WHO HAD TESTED POSITIVE OF COVID-19 SOME TIMES ARE NOT BEING GIVEN THE VACCINE BECAUSE OF THE SHORTAGE. AND IF YES, WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO ARE BEING REINFECTED, ANY IDEA?

Testing positive means that you are infected by the virus. Many people become ill and some so severely, that they die of the consequences. Some still (and we cannot predict who will have this course) are infected and their body is able to fight the disease without them having symptom.

The World over, mostly older people above 70 years and people living with chronic diseases (diabetes, heart diseases, kidney problems, lung problems, infectious diseases like tuberculosis and HIV etc. ) die of COVID 19.

The danger comes in, when young and healthy people and children carry the virus and spread to those I just mentioned here. Most of them would die. This would mean a great loss to our community.

Coming to your question: If you have been tested positive and had symptoms or not, but have recovered well, your immune system could effectively fight against the virus and your body produced what we call antibodies. It means you will not get the virus again, once in contact with it.

## CONCLUSION

This paper seeks to inform the public and clarify answers around the COVID Pandemic. I tried to touch all aspects and am sure that there are still areas, where more questions may arise. Please feel free to file in your questions, which can be answered either online (Facebook, WhatsApp) and or through our digital weekly newsletter: Wa'bin wiy aa lo. Send your comments and questions to [fama12@gmx.de](mailto:fama12@gmx.de)

This paper does not claim to answer all questions about the COVID 19. It is produced with independent judgement of the sources and without influence from anybody (natural or non-natural). Any body using this source of information is doing so to their responsibility. I herewith declare that I do not have a conflict of interest.

09.04.2021

Dr. Gilbert Lawong

## SOURCES

1. WHO, Origin of SARS-CoV-2, 26 March 2020
2. German Association of Thrombosis and Hemostasis Research, Position paper on Vaccination with AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine, 21<sup>st</sup>. March 2021
3. World Health Organization: [www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus](http://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus)
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)
5. Government response strategy to the Coronavirus Pandemic (Covid 19), the special statement of 17.03.2020
6. Novel coronavirus, Elsevier Interactive Patient Education © 2020 Elsevier Inc. 23.01.2020
7. <https://www.thelancet.com/>

8. [https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges\\_Coronavirus/Situationsberichte/Dez\\_2020/2020-12-08-en.pdf](https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/Situationsberichte/Dez_2020/2020-12-08-en.pdf))
9. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/covid19/mortality-overview.htm>