

Project Title: COVID-19 Preventive Measures & Mental Health Support for Nigeria	Project Geographical Location: Poor Communities within the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja) Nigeria
Name of Organization: Secure De Future International Initiative	Abbreviation of the organisation: SDF
Address: 2 Arusha Crescent Wuse zone 1	Telephone: 08024438448
Website: Sdfinitiative.org	Skype:
Contact person of the organization: Sa'adatu Adamu	e-mail of contact person in relation to this application: saa.adamu@sdfinitiative.org
Budget: \$50,000	Duration: July 2020 – June 2021

Context of the Project

Nigeria recorded the first case of Corona virus on 27 February 2020 and since then, the United Nations has cautioned that Africa could be the next epicenter of Covid19 pandemic if necessary measures are not taken to prevent this.¹ The government of Nigeria has placed so much emphasis on wearing of facemasks in public, washing of hands and the prohibition of social gatherings. Lockdowns have been enforced in different states but the shocking reality remains that once there is a lift in the restriction of movements, Nigerians soon teem closely together at market places, banks or even street corners, completely disregarding social distancing. Similar overcrowding has been witnessed anytime people

¹ <https://www.africanews.com/2020/05/07/africa-s-coronavirus-deaths-pass-1000-mark//>

are receiving palliatives of any sort. This obviously shows that people do not really believe in the dangers of not observing social distance as a means of prevention among others.

According to Africa Business Radio, though social distancing is a valid containment solution for the novel corona virus, it is a solution that doesn't grasp a reality that is extremely widespread across Africa: people survive difficulty by coming together as communities of care, not pulling apart in a retreat into individualism. The World Health Organization is promoting social distancing as an essential response to this pandemic, forgetting that there are many parts of the world where this single solution is contextually inadequate or even dangerous.² This project will use a culturally sensitive means of educating Nigerians on the need for social distancing and how to effectively receive support in spite of physical distance.

Another overlooked aspect of this pandemic is the psychosocial support. Mental health in Nigeria is often ignored or never given the desired attention even though emotional, psychological issues and social well-being are paramount to our everyday living. This informs how we think, feel and act especially in this period of stress caused by Covid-19. The COVID-19 pandemic has but created a restrictive environment and limited outlets for some people with mental health issues to deal with normal every day stresses and pressures. As the Corona Virus (COVID-19) lockdown is gradually being relaxed in Nigeria and the world-over the mental health impact on the people will begin. Some people with well-planned lives and good hopes for the future may not have it the same anymore. Families may have been separated with no knowledge of when they can reunite and some may not see their loved ones ever again. Yet others may lose their jobs, be under-employed or under-paid as the economic impact and realities of the lockdown will necessitate budget cuts and downsizing of staff.

First responders and frontline intervention workers on COVID-19 have experienced some horrific and unexplainable deaths, changes in their work environment, direct exposure to the dreaded virus and might have developed a pessimistic life expectancy. These frontline workers may also have been exposed to explicit traumatic sounds and images of the dying and dead victims with health risks to their families and society. Some may seem asymptomatic to the impacts of stress and trauma but in the aftermath, there can be post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Alteration in thinking, mood or behaviour may be interrupted by intrusive traumatic memories and recurring distressing thoughts of experiences with victims of covid-19 with no imaginable end in sight.

² <https://www.africabusinessradio.com/content/554>

This project aims to provide mental health support to first responders and offer intensive culturally contextualized sensitization to the public on the need to maintain social distancing and all other measures to limit the spread of the virus. This effort will equally address the information gap, myths and disbelief among Nigerians as it regards COVID-19.

Implementing Organization & Partners

The project's sole implementer is SDF in partnership with Pad Up Africa and MeCAHT

Secure the Future International Initiative (SDF)

Secure the Future International Initiative (SDF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to serve as a tool for the reformation of the mindset of the people through psychotherapy, counseling and human capital development. SDF uses various mediums to work on mental health in Nigeria.

Pad Up Africa

Pad-Up Africa is a non-profit organisation established in 2017 born out of passion and a sense of responsibility toward curbing the deficits knowledge gap and skills set on good menstrual hygiene management among adolescent girls and women in Africa.

Media Coalition & Awareness to Halt Trafficking (MeCAHT)

MeCAHT is a registered Organization, working in partnership with both local and international partners to reduce the incidences of Human Trafficking through the use of media resources and by strengthening the economic base of low-income families and vulnerable population.

Project Objectives:

1. To reinforce and sustain current efforts to prevent further infection and spread of the dreaded virus.
2. To promote healthier and safe social and physical content "New Normal".
3. To provide appropriate and sector-specific therapies to families, workers etc.
4. To provide holistic mental-health awareness and management training for Nigerians.

5. To provide Autogenic Trainings (AT) for care givers.
6. To provide post-trauma health strategies to mitigate the impacts of stress and traumatic experiences on health so as to help people focus on Problem, Emotion and Positive coping strategies thereby building resilience during the pandemic.
7. To provide Critical Incidence Stress Management (CISM) to frontline / first responders and mitigate stress/trauma impacts as well as equip them for future disasters and pandemics.
8. Institute advocacy platforms in different strata of society for the identification of people with mental health challenges.

Project duration/Location

This project will last for 3 months but the monitoring and evaluation will be on for One (1) year. The project will take place online and will target rural 3 rural communities within Abuja.

Proposed Project Activities

We will implement among others the following activities:

1	Preliminary meetings with community heads and relevant stakeholders like chiefs, radio stations, artists, youth leaders, government health officials and law enforcement officers
2	Selection of 7 target poor communities in Abuja
3	Recruitment and selection of beneficiaries.
4	Conduct skills gap assessment for the selected beneficiaries.
5	Conduct online counseling and education on mental health to manage stress, trauma and build resilience during the pandemic for 500 frontline workers
6	Production of culturally sensitive online training resource and campaign equipment
7	Implement ToT online awareness campaign among 10,000 target beneficiaries
8	Donation of palliatves & PPE to the 10,000 target beneficiaries
9	Launch mass media sensitization campaign on Covid -19 and social distancing
10	Monitoring and Evaluation
11	Final Reportong & Completion Ceremony

Strategy & Methodology

The preparatory phase will include available support mechanism and joint planning and development of online materials in the language of the communities with the support of all relevant stakeholders. The project is envisaged to be highly participatory for all stakeholders involved hence the use of a multi-sectoral approach.

The organization of the project targets the vulnerable population such as the poor, illiterate, marginalized, frontline workers and displaced members of the society. The general criteria for beneficiary selection to be employed includes priority to 1,667 households with not less than 6 members each, located in 7 poor communities around Abuja, Nigeria (238 households per community). We will use a zero contact approach to create a training of trainers (ToT) awareness campaign on the need for mental health support and social distance enforcement. Followed by a mass media awareness. All trainings will be recorded as short video segments and sent via whatsapp alongside questinoarries that have been formulated. The project will make available smart phones which support whatsapp to be used in each household. The project will also hand out palliatives and PPE to all target beneficiaries who successfully complete the engagement with the project.

Our team of local volunteers will be trained and equipped with skills to assist during the online sessions.

A critical component of this project is to enforce social distancing as a means of preventing the spread of COVID -19. The main intention of this effort is to sensitize the whole nation through various means; social media campaigns, mass media campaigns, community outreach campaigns, flyers and brooches. However, for the meantime, focus will remain on Abuja, the FCT.

Social distancing measures will be advocated through media houses, social media and organized community campaigns too. This will ensure outreach to a considerable number of people. Brooches will be designed with special campaign image to support this campaign. It shall be worn always to keep everyone we see, glued to the topic of social distancing. This entails a continuous creation of awareness for others.

A theme song will be composed to follow our campaigns on social distancing. This song will contain sensitive information on the need to defeat the virus by adhering to this measure. In order to increase awareness and ensure widespread circulation of this song, we will have a celebrity sing it along online while advocating for adherence to social distancing among people in public places. This theme song shall also accompany our campaigns on social media, radio houses, TV station and community campaigns.

Furthermore, we shall design and produce mini flags and stickers carrying the campaign messages to be hung and placed on cars, entrances of public places like stores, offices,

worship houses, and markets to keep people attached to the new way of life we have to follow.

Project Duration

The project will be implemented in duration of twelve months as illustrated in the work plan below.

July 2020 – June 2021

Proposed Project Activities	Implementation Period (Quarters)			
	3rd (July-Sept)	4th (Oct-Dec)	1st (Jan-March)	2nd (April-June)
Preliminary meetings with community heads and relevant stakeholders like chiefs, radio stations, artists, youth leaders, government health officials and law enforcement officers	X			
Selection of 7 target poor communities in Abuja	X			
Recruitment and selection of beneficiaries.	X			
Conduct skills gap assessment for the selected beneficiaries.	X			
Conduct online counseling and education on mental health to manage stress, trauma and build resilience during the pandemic for 500 frontline workers		X	X	X
Production of culturally sensitive online training resource and campaign equipment		X		
Implement ToT online awareness campaign among 10,000 target beneficiaries		X	X	X

Donation of palliatves & PPE to the 10,000 target beneficiaries		X	X	X
Launch mass media sensitization campaign on Covid -19 and social distancing	X	X	X	X
Monitoring and Evaluation		X	X	X
Final Reportong & Completion Ceremony				X

Sustainability

This project is built for first responders/frontline workers and the grass-roots population. It is formulated to benefit the community of the poor and marginalized population and wil work in conjunction with traditional rulers and community leaders to ensure sustainability. The empowerment of a core group will ensure that the entire community owns the project. This intervention will have a self-protecting mechanism in dealing with conflict situations. Apart from the partners in the project area and the goodwill of communities it will also seek the endorsement of religious, traditional leaders and relevant government authorities.

Budget

\$50,000