

Data updated April 30, 2020



Background

Public health and social measures (PHSMs) are an important strategy to slow transmission of COVID-19 and reduce the burden on health care systems. Effective implementation of PHSMs requires public support and adherence, but they can place a significant burden on people, especially when they restrict movement or entail the closure of services. This situational analysis, based on publicly available data and a recent phone survey, aims to inform efforts in Egypt to balance PHSMs to mitigate COVID-19 with other priorities, including public acceptance and social impacts.

Effective Implementation of Public Health and Social Measures in Egypt: Situational Analysis

Highlights¹

Public health and social measures should respond to data about the growth of the epidemic and be implemented in a way that engages communities. Communities should be involved in helping to determine strategies for adapting measures to the local context, protecting livelihoods, and introducing appropriate relief measures to counteract the economic impact of these measures. The government should counter misinformation with appropriate risk communication and engage with communities to ensure voluntary adherence to COVID-19 response measures.

- Egypt has the continent's second-largest COVID-19 epidemic, according to confirmed cases. The epidemic has doubled in the past 14 days, which could indicate slowing growth; however recent daily reported cases have been high. The high case-fatality rate indicates that the scale of the epidemic may be larger than detected cases suggest.
- Schools are closed, non-essential government business suspended and public and religious gatherings banned; a stay-at-home order was in place from April 3-10.
- Egypt is planning to chart a way to relax measures after the end of Ramadan, adopting a plan to "coexist" with the pandemic and gradually reopen businesses with a review of the situation every two weeks.
- The economic and social impacts of the epidemic will be significant and the government is responding with social assistance measures to reduce the burden.
- According to survey results, awareness of COVID-19 is almost universal, but there are high levels of misinformation about the disease, including stigma and blame directed at ethnic Chinese. Other myths may give Egyptians a false sense of protection, such as the belief that Africans cannot get COVID-19.
- Most survey respondents saw COVID-19 as a problem for the country, but there is surprisingly low personal risk perception given the size of the epidemic, with only 37% of Egyptians surveyed reporting that they are at high risk of contracting the disease.
- The vast majority of Egyptians surveyed said they were satisfied with the government response to date, but distrust of government information is high.
- There have been several security incidents involving police clashes with protesters or mourners. Reports have also shown harassment of health workers, including public accusations of spreading COVID-19, evictions, and being reported to police.

ABOUT PERC

The Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19 (PERC) is a public-private partnership that supports evidence-based measures to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on African countries. PERC member organizations are: Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention; Resolve to Save Lives, an initiative of Vital Strategies; the World Health Organization; the UK Public Health Rapid Support Team; and the World Economic Forum. Ipsos and Novetta Mission Analytics bring market research expertise and years of data analytic support to the partnership.

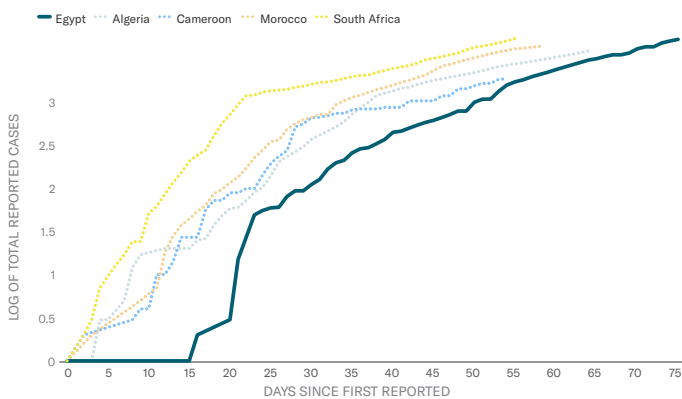
¹ This situational analysis brief is based on data from available sources as of the date of publication, and may not reflect more recent developments or data from other sources not referenced. Information about data sources available here: <https://preventepidemics.org/coronavirus/perc/data>

Disease Dynamics

EGYPT WAS THE FIRST COUNTRY IN AFRICA TO CONFIRM A COVID-19 CASE, AND CURRENTLY HAS THE SECOND LARGEST NUMBER OF CONFIRMED CASES ON THE CONTINENT.

| Total cases | Total deaths | Case-fatality rate (%) | Total # of days to double case count | Date of first reported case |
|--------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 5,268 | 380 | 7.21 | 14 | February 15 |

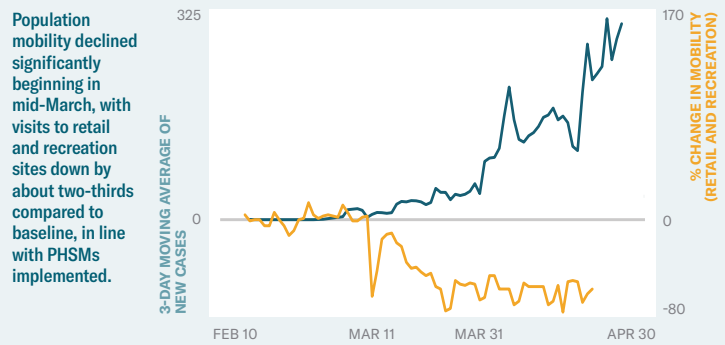
Caseload in Egypt has grown at a similar pace to other high-caseload countries
 as of April 30, 2020



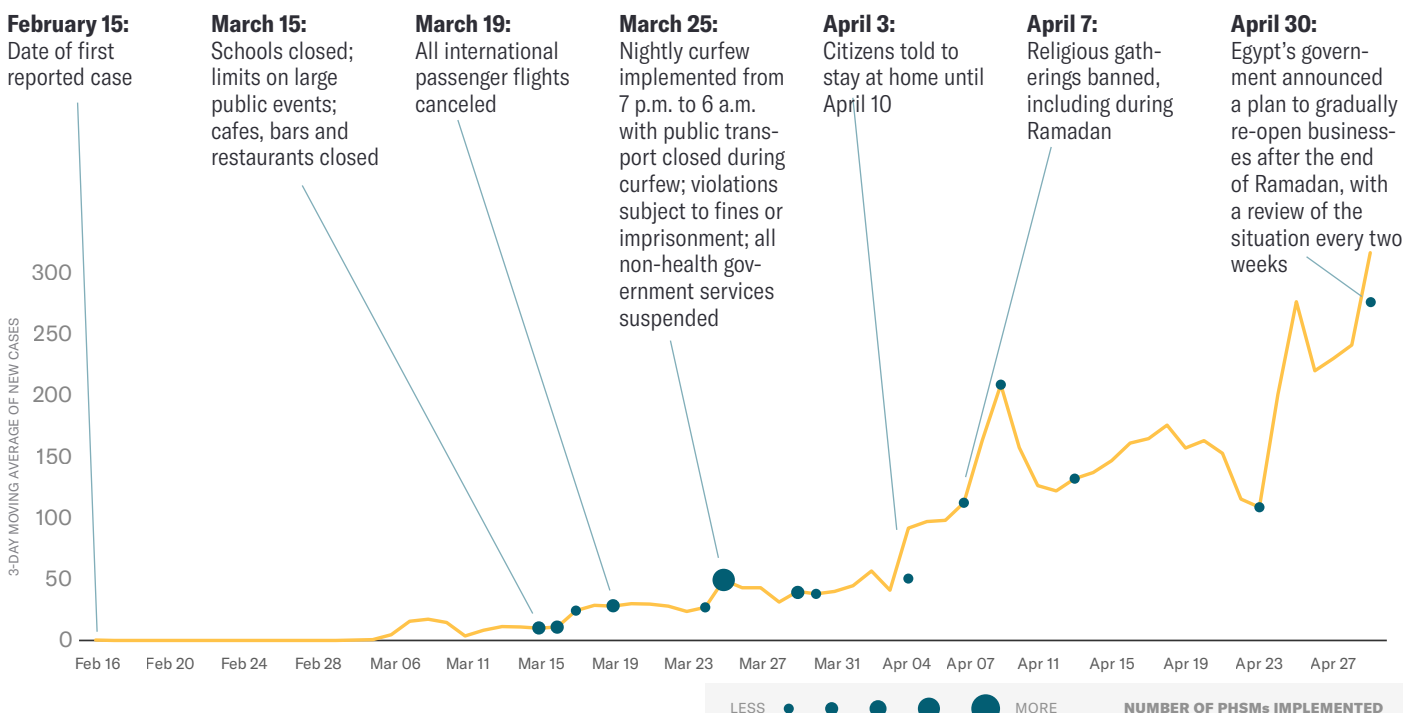
- There was a two-week lag between the detection of the first and second COVID-19 case in Egypt. Despite the initial delays in detection, Egypt's COVID-19 epidemic has grown at a similar pace to the other four most affected countries in the region: South Africa, Morocco, Algeria and Cameroon.
- The daily number of new reported cases in Egypt has increased over the past two weeks.
- As of April 30, the doubling time is 14 days. Doubling time is the number of days it took for cases to double to reach the current level. This metric can be used to estimate the recent rate of transmission, with higher doubling times indicating slower growth. In general, doubling times exceeding seven to 10 days and increasing over time suggest a slowing of the epidemic.
- Case-fatality rate (CFR) describes the proportion of reported deaths to reported cases. The CFR in Egypt is high at 7.2%, most likely an overestimate due to undetected cases (mild, presymptomatic and asymptomatic). For example, while South Africa and Egypt have a similar number of reported cases, Egypt has reported more than three times more deaths.
- No publicly collated data on testing are available for Egypt from our data source, so the degree to which reported cases reflect disease transmission is difficult to assess.

Implementation of Key PHSMs

THE GOVERNMENT BEGAN TO INTRODUCE PHSMS A MONTH AFTER THE FIRST CASE WAS REPORTED; CURRENTLY SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED AND THERE IS A NIGHTLY CURFEW BUT NO NATIONAL STAY-AT-HOME ORDER IS IN PLACE.



3-day moving average of new cases and date of PHSM implementation

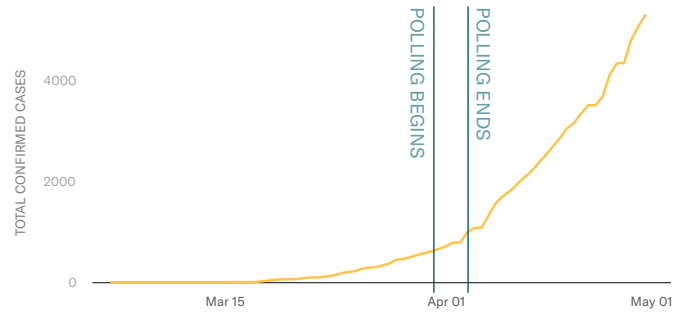


Public Reactions to COVID-19 and Related PHSMs

RESULTS FROM RECENT POLLING

Market research firm Ipsos conducted a telephone poll of 1,098 adults in Cairo between March 30 and April 3, 2020. At the time of polling, Egypt had 576 to 779 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Timing of poll in Egypt

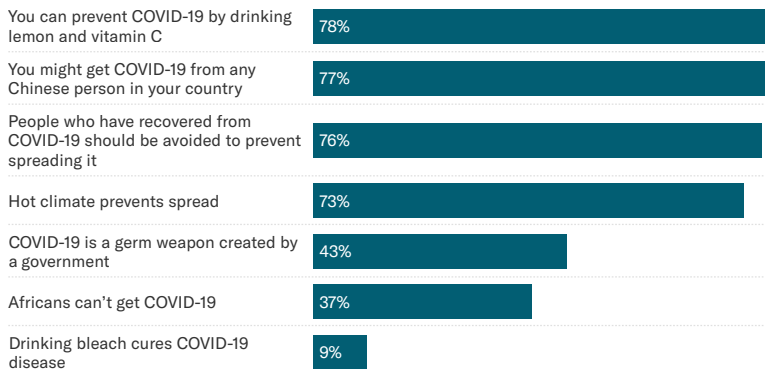


Information on COVID-19

Urban Egyptians have high awareness of the epidemic (99%). However, many continue to hold misperceptions related to the outbreak, including some that could offer a misplaced sense of protection: 37% believe that Africans can't get COVID-19. Other misperceptions could contribute to stigma: 76% believe that those who have recovered should be avoided, while 77% believe that you could get it from any Chinese person in the country. Two in five (43%) said they did not have enough information, particularly on prevention, transmission and cure.

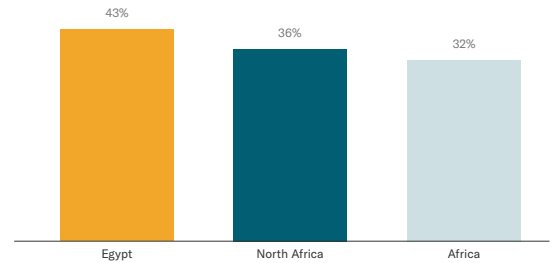
Belief in Misinformation and Rumors

Percentage believing each false statement is probably or definitely true



Demand for Information

Percentage reporting they **do not** currently have enough information about COVID-19



Information Needs

30%

want more information on how to cure COVID-19

23%

want more information on how to protect themselves and their families

21%

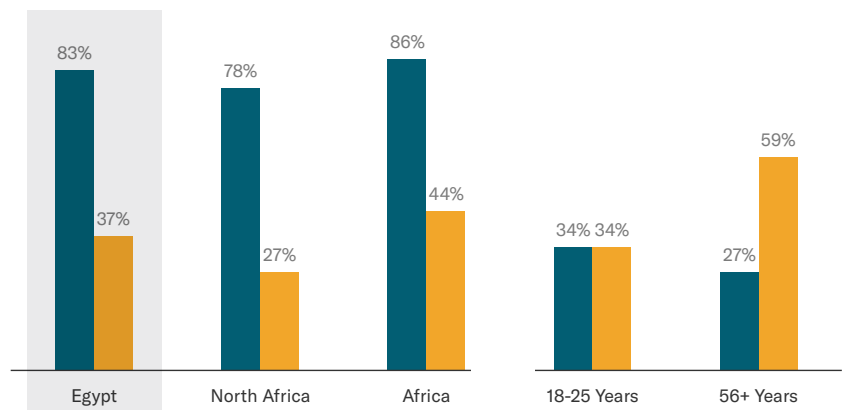
want more information on how COVID-19 spreads

Risk Perceptions

The majority of Egyptians surveyed (83%) think COVID-19 will be a problem for the country but only 37% said that their personal risk was high or very high. Older adults were more likely to say that they were at high risk (59%).

RISK PERCEPTIONS IN EGYPT IN CONTEXT

RISK PERCEPTIONS IN EGYPT BY AGE



■ Percentage reporting COVID-19 will be a problem in the country
 ■ Percentage reporting personal risk of catching COVID-19 high/very high

Support for Government and PHSMs

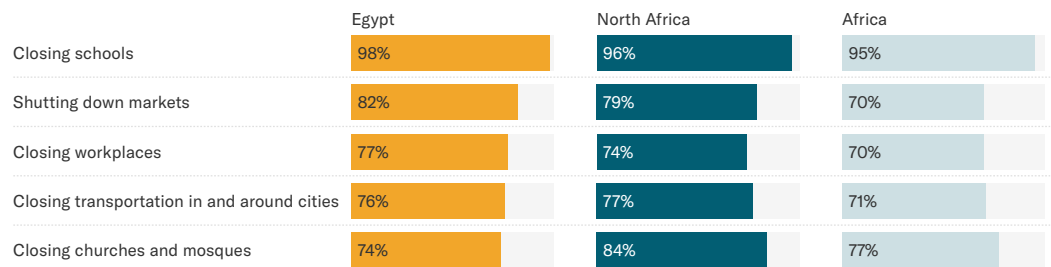
Most respondents (86%) were satisfied with the government’s response to date, but a lower share trusted the information provided by the government on COVID-19 (60%). In contrast, when asked about a range of health information sources, doctors were a more trusted source (86%), compared to the presidency (79%).

Respondents expressed optimism about being able to get the care they needed to deal with the illness if they became infected, with 64% confident that they could get help.

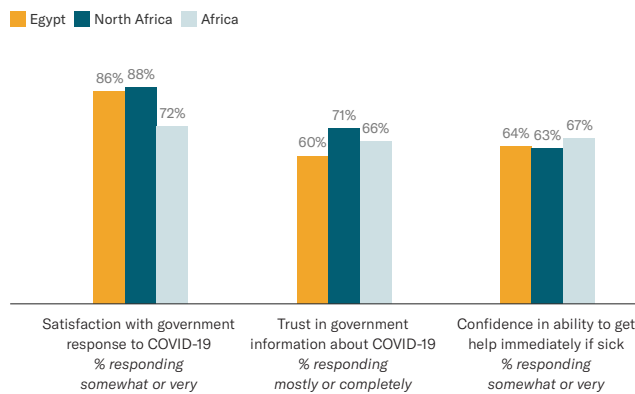
Urban Egyptians were supportive of a wide range of PHSMs to help limit the spread of the coronavirus, particularly school closures (98%). Support levels fell for measures that would restrict movement and livelihoods, such as closing markets (82%), workplaces (77%), or transport (76%).

Support for PHSMs

Percentage of respondents that somewhat or strongly support

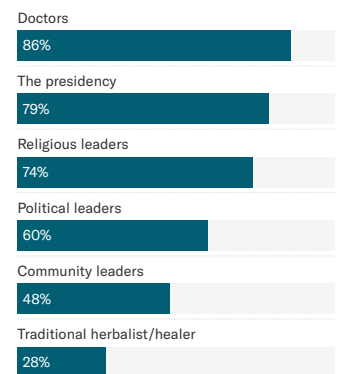


Perceptions of Government and Health System



Trust in Information Sources

Percentage that completely or mostly trust each source for health information



Barriers to Adherence

It may be difficult for households to comply with some measures: most said they would run out of food (84%) and money (58%) within a week, with higher levels of vulnerability among low-income households.

70%

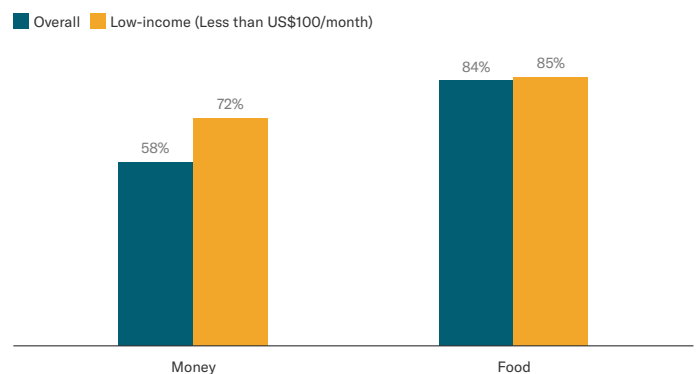
of respondents have a separate room in the home to isolate someone with COVID-19

53%

of respondents in families making less than US\$100 per month have a separate room in the home to isolate someone with COVID-19

Supplies of Food and Money

Percentage who expect to run out in 1 week or less



Economic and Relief Measures

Declining tourism, reduced remittances, capital outflows, and falling domestic demand are straining the Egyptian economy. The country's exports as well as earnings from the Suez Canal are expected to be affected by the global slowdown. The government has developed an EGP100 billion (US\$6.13 billion) stimulus package, half of which will go to support the tourism industry.

- **Health care:** The government has allocated an additional EGP5 billion (US\$320 million) to the health sector, which will include investment in supplies and equipment, as well as bonuses for health care workers in quarantine.
- **Social support:** The stimulus package includes a 14% top-up of pensions; expansion of the targeted cash transfer programs Takaful and Karama to 160,000 additional families; and a one-off payment for informal workers in severely hit sectors.
- **Food security:** Authorities have suspended the export of all types of legumes for a period of three months and plan to start increasing strategic food reserves to meet domestic demand.

Overview of Security Incidents Related to COVID-19

A rise in unrest or insecurity—including peaceful protests as well as riots and violence by and against civilians—can affect adherence to PHSMs and serve as a warning sign of the burden such measures are imposing on people. Several COVID-19-related incidents have been reported in Egypt since March, most involving clashes between police and protesters during enforcement of PHSMs. The Sudanese embassy in Giza was also attacked by Sudanese citizens in protest of Sudan's decision to close its borders. In April, reports emerged of harassment of health workers, including public accusations of spreading COVID-19, evictions, being reported to police, and other forms of harassment.

INFORMATION ABOUT DATA SOURCES AVAILABLE HERE: [HTTPS://PREVENTEPIDEMICS.ORG/CORONAVIRUS/PERC/DATA](https://preventepidemics.org/coronavirus/perc/data)

