

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 Nigeria 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 Nigeria: 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.

- Nigeria has one of the largest COVID-19 epidemics in Africa, and the caseload continues to grow rapidly, doubling in the past eight days.
- The government has implemented a number of PHSMs, including lockdowns in the most heavily affected states. In line with these measures, population mobility has fallen since late March.
- The government announced a phased plan to begin reopening the economy, sector by sector, starting May 4. Given the country's growing epidemic and limited testing capacity, it will be important to closely monitor how new cases evolve.
- According to survey results, Nigerians are highly aware of COVID-19 and recognize that it will be a major problem for the country. However, people reported lower perceptions of personal risk of infection.
- While there is majority support for PHSMs and the government response overall, there is significant minority disapproval. Nearly half of survey respondents indicated that they did not trust government information about COVID-19.
- There have been reports of heavy-handed enforcement of PHSMs by police as well as demonstrations against measures and isolated reports of mob violence; these signs of unrest are one indicator of the burden these measures are placing on communities.

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.

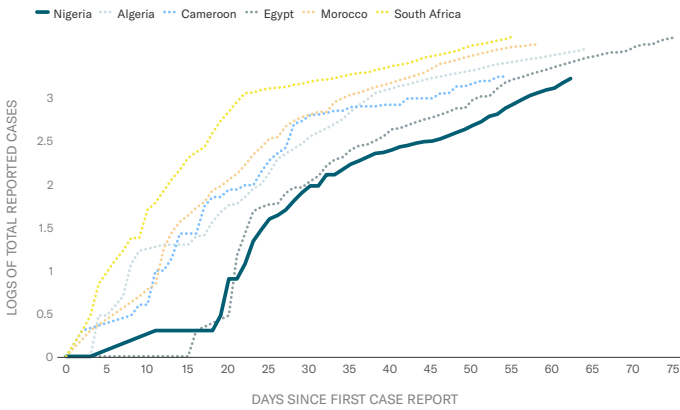
¹ This situational analysis brief is based on data from available sources as of the date of publication, and may not reflect more recent developments or data from other sources not referenced. Information about data sources available here: <https://preventepidemics.org/coronavirus/perc/data>

Disease Dynamics

NIGERIA WAS ONE OF THE FIRST COUNTRIES ON THE CONTINENT TO REPORT A COVID-19 CASE, AND IS EXPERIENCING A SIGNIFICANT EPIDEMIC WITH RAPID GROWTH.

Total cases	Total deaths	Case-fatality rate (%)	Total # of days to double case count	Date of first reported case
1,728	51	2.95	8	February 28

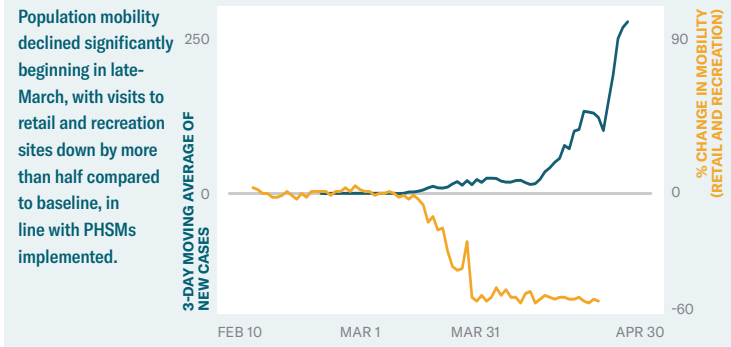
Rate of growth of caseload in Nigeria has been similar to Egypt, which has the second highest caseload on the continent
 as of April 30, 2020



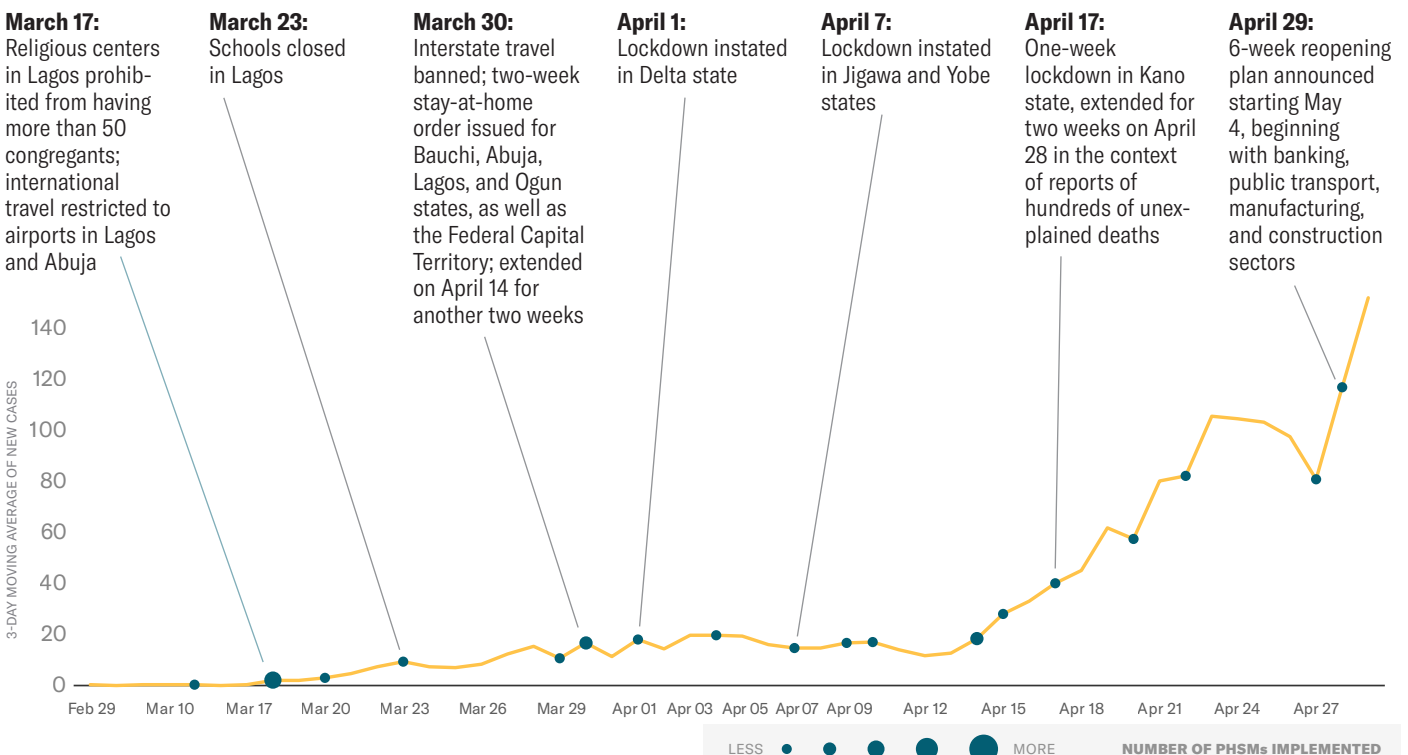
- Since its first case at the end of February, Nigeria's epidemic has grown at a similar pace to Egypt, the country with the second highest caseload on the continent.
- The number of daily new reported cases in Nigeria has increased over the past two weeks.
- As of April 30, the doubling time is 8 days. 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.
- If testing is deemed to be sufficient or is increasing, then changes in case counts per day can also be used to assess COVID-19 transmission. Testing in Nigeria remains very limited. As measured by daily tests per 1,000 people, Nigeria's testing rate is 0.06 per 1,000, the lowest rate among the eleven African countries that have reported testing data.² Test positivity is relatively high, with 10.9 tests per confirmed case (9% positivity rate), another indicator of limited testing capacity.

Implementation of Key PHSMs

Nigeria tightened PHSMs within three weeks of the first confirmed case. Population movement decreased following regional closures and limits on religious gatherings in mid-March. Nigeria's president has announced a phased plan to reopen the economy starting on May 4.



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



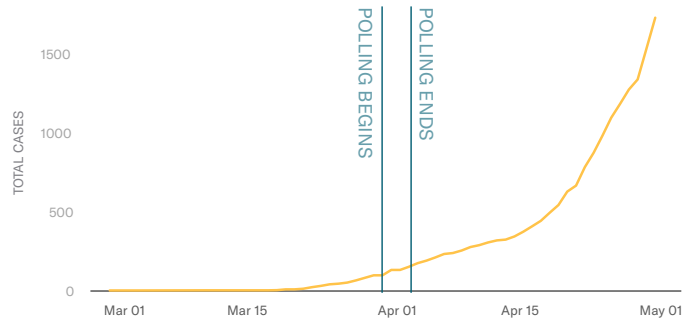
² As of April 28, Nigeria has conducted a total of 12,004 tests. Note that testing data are currently only available for the following countries in Africa: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia, Uganda and Zimbabwe, according to official sources collated by Our World in Data <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/full-list-total-tests-for-covid-19>.

Public Reactions to COVID-19 and Related PHSMs

RESULTS FROM RECENT POLLING

Market research firm Ipsos conducted a telephone poll of 1,068 adults in three urban and peri-urban areas of Nigeria (513 in Lagos, 110 in Abuja, and 445 in Kano) between March 30 and April 2, 2020. At the time of polling, Nigeria had 97 to 151 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Timing of poll in Nigeria

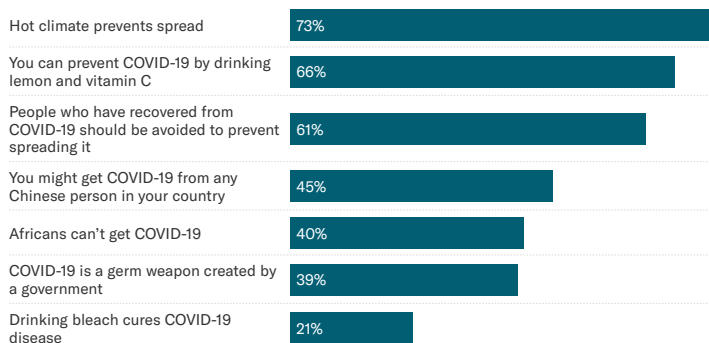


Information on COVID-19

Among urban Nigerians, awareness of COVID-19 was almost universal at 99%. However, many continue to hold misperceptions related to the outbreak, including some that could offer a misplaced sense of protection—40% believe that Africans cannot get it and 73% believe that hot climate prevents spread. Other misperceptions could contribute to stigma—61% believe that those who have recovered should be avoided, while 45% believe that you could get it from any Chinese person in the country. One in four (24%) said they did not have enough information, particularly on whether there is a cure, prevention, and causes.

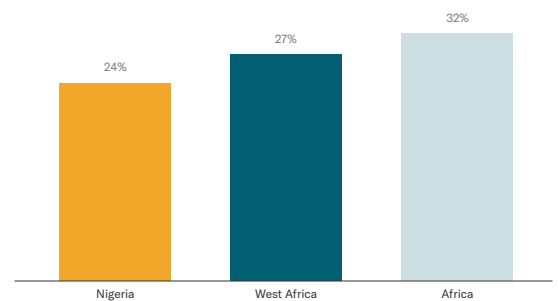
Belief in Misinformation and Rumors

Percentage believing statement probably/definitely true



Demand for Information

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

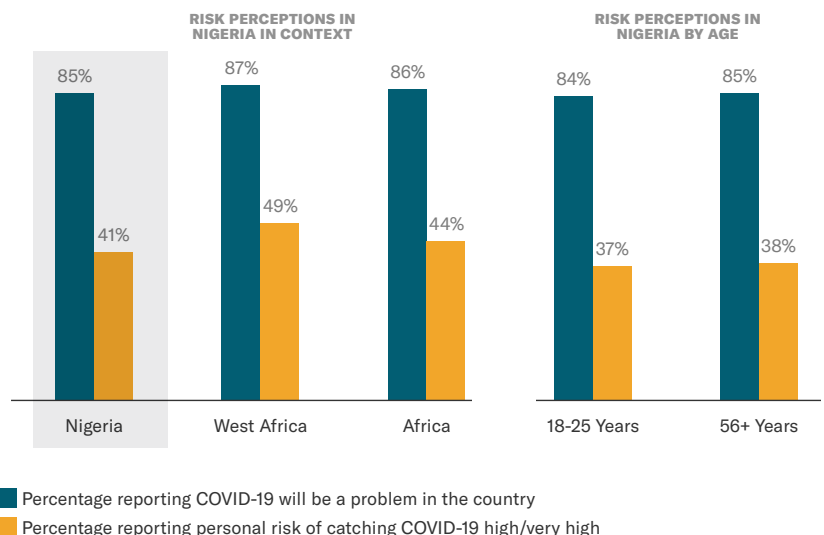


Information Needs



Risk Perception

While 85% of respondents in Nigeria reported that COVID-19 will be a problem for the country, only 41% said they believe that they are at high risk of catching coronavirus.



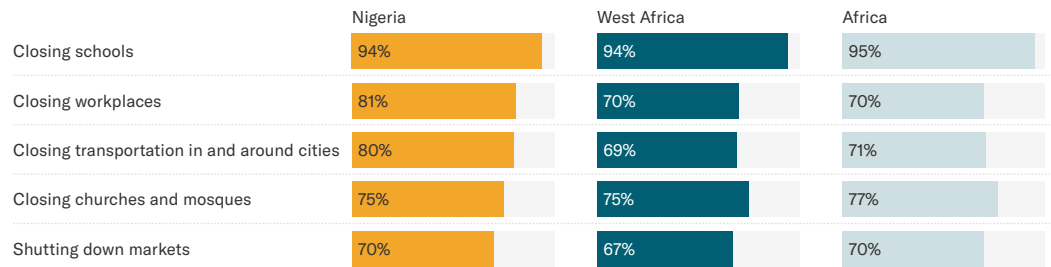
Support for Government and PHSMs

Six out of 10 respondents were satisfied with the government’s response to date, and about half trust the information provided by the government on COVID-19 (54%). Nearly three-quarters (71%) of respondents felt confident they would get the help they needed if they were to fall sick.

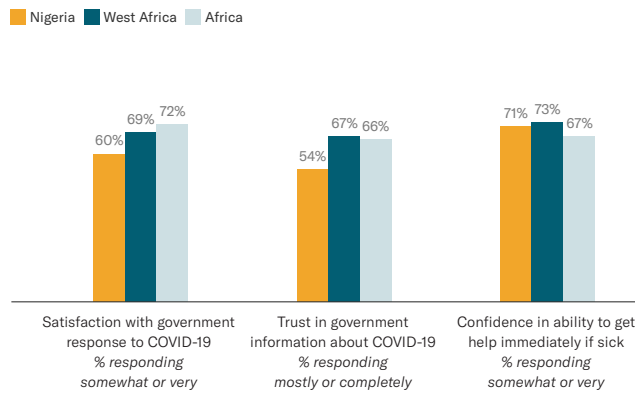
Nigerians support a wide range of PHSMs to help limit the spread of the coronavirus. For example, 94% supported closing schools. Support for shutting down markets was lower at 70%.

Support for PHSMs

Percentage of respondents that somewhat or strongly support

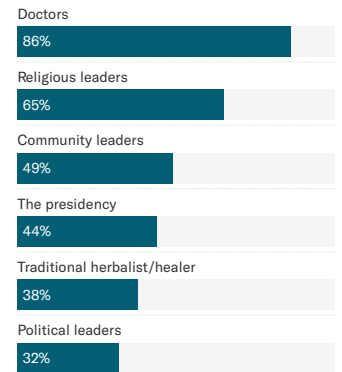


Perceptions of Government & Health System



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 PHSMs, as most would run out of food and money within a week (particularly low-income households), and only one in four households has a separate room to isolate sick family members.

28%

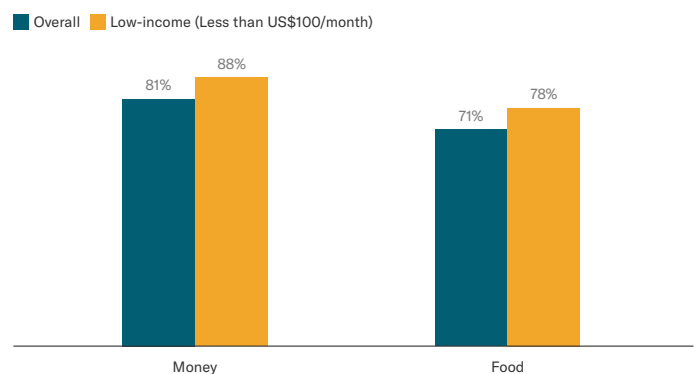
of respondents have a separate room in the home to isolate someone with COVID-19

23%

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 & Money

Percentage who expect to run out in 1 week or less, by category



Economic Impact and Relief Measures

The fall in global oil prices is severely affecting the Nigerian economy and exacerbating fiscal imbalances. The economic turmoil is reflected in rising inflation, pressure on the local currency (the naira), and a falling stock market. An economic contraction is likely in 2020. In an online survey of eight countries conducted by BFA Global, 73% of Nigerians polled April 11-12 said that their income had already decreased as a result of the pandemic, up from 47% just two weeks earlier. More than half of respondents expected the crisis to have a severe financial effect on their household. The government has approved a COVID-19 intervention fund of N500 billion (US\$1.4 billion) to finance the response and cushion the economic impact.

- Health care:** The government allocated contingency funds of N984 million (US\$2.7 million) to Nigeria's Centre for Disease Control, and distributed an additional N6.5 billion (US\$18 million) to purchase testing kits, open isolation centers, and train medical personnel. A grant of N10 billion (US\$28 million) was released to the Lagos state government to support its COVID-19 response.
- Social support:** The government is scaling up its existing social protection program, the National Social Safety Nets Project, and has added an additional 1 million households to the beneficiary register, bringing the total to about 4 million. In April, the program began distributing payments of N20,000 (US\$52) to the lowest-income families as a four-month upfront payment. The government is also providing emergency loans and a moratorium on loan repayments for traders.
- Food security:** Food insecurity is a major ongoing concern in Nigeria, with 75 million people already consuming insufficient food. In Lagos, the state government budgeted to distribute rations to 200,000 households. The federal government has released grain from the National Strategic Grain Reserves to distribute to people affected by COVID-19.

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. Since the first report in March, more than fifty security incidents have been reported throughout the country, primarily related to enforcement of PHSMs by police, public demonstrations against these measures, and demands for economic assistance, but also including attacks against journalists and a health worker by police and incidents of mob violence. A number of incidents have involved clashes between police and worshippers congregating in defiance of COVID restrictions on religious gatherings. There have been 20 reported fatalities.

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

