

Responding to COVID-19: Highlights of a Survey in MOROCCO

Summary

- All Moroccans know about COVID-19 and basic understanding about transmission and the importance of regular hand washing is high. However, a sizeable minority seek more information, which may help address some misconceptions on avoidance and ‘cures.’
- Most Moroccans are positive about the government’s response to date and trust the information it provides on it.
- Moroccans see the virus as a threat to their country but opinion is divided on whether they are personally at risk. They are supportive of a wide range of personal and community public health social measures (PHSMs) to help limit the spread of the coronavirus at this comparatively early stage of its spread in Morocco.
- TV along with social media are the key information sources the public relies on.

Background

Public health social measures (PHSMs) are an important strategy to delay and reduce the magnitude of COVID-19. PHSMs particularly those that restrict movement or entail the closure of services, can place a significant burden on populations. The effective implementation of PHSMs will require public support and compliance. Hence, this survey was conducted to assess public support for, and the likely social impacts of PHSMs in Morocco.

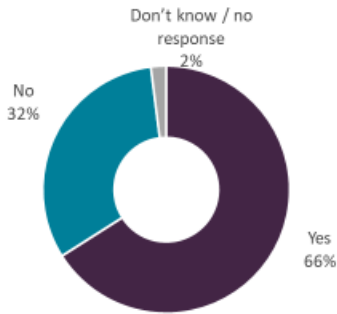
Key Findings of the Survey

Awareness of COVID-19 is high – but a sizeable minority seek more information and there is considerable misunderstanding on prevention and ‘cures’

- Everyone in Morocco has heard of COVID-19 (100%). Most spontaneously associate the symptoms with fever (87%), difficulty breathing / shortness of breath (73%) and dry cough (66%). Nevertheless, one in three (32%) Moroccans feel they do not have enough information about it. Those with higher monthly household incomes are more likely to feel they have enough information.
- One in five or more would like more information on ‘how to cure it/is there a cure’ (22%); ‘how to protect myself/my family from it’ (21%); almost one in six would be interested in ‘how it spreads/how you catch it’ (17%).
- Half or more believe that hot climate prevents the spread of the virus (58%) or that it can be prevented by drinking lemon and Vitamin C (48%). Small proportions believe that it can be cured with garlic (12%); that Africans can’t get it (8%); or that drinking bleach cures it (3%).

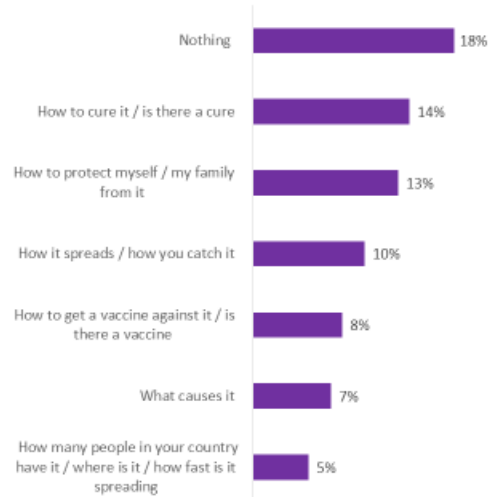


Q10. Do you feel you currently have enough information about the coronavirus/Covid-19 situation?



% who feel they have enough information	
Gender:	
Male	65
Female	67
Age:	
18-25 years	64
26-35 years	68
36-45 years	65
46-55 years	64
56 and older	70
Monthly Household Income:	
\$0-100	60
\$101-200	61
\$201-500	65
\$501+	73

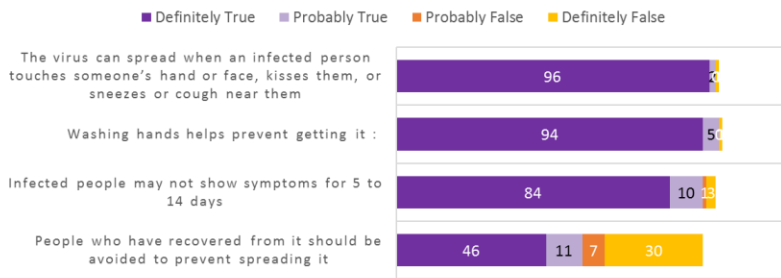
Q11. What are the two things about it that you would like most to have more information about?



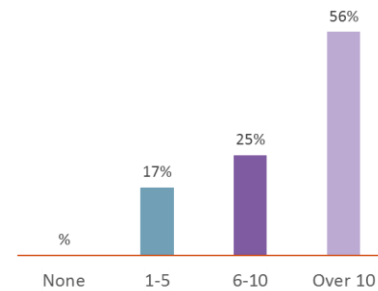
Nevertheless, the basic understanding of close contact transmission and the importance of hand washing stands high

- Almost all think COVID-19 can be spread by touch, kiss, sneeze, or cough (99%, including 96% thinking this is 'definitely true') and that washing hands helps prevent getting it (99%, including 94% 'definitely true'). More than one in two (56%) think people who have recovered from it should be avoided due to risk spreading the virus.
- Three times as many stated they washed their hands over 10 times in the day prior to their interview compared with those washing 5 times or fewer (56% versus 17%). Women tend to wash their hands more often than men; this is also true for those from Rabat vs. those in Casablanca.

Q14. I'm going to read things people have said about coronavirus or Covid-19. Please tell me if you think each is definitely true, probably true, probably false, or definitely false. (%)



Q40. Yesterday, how many times did you wash your hands with soap or use hand sanitizer?

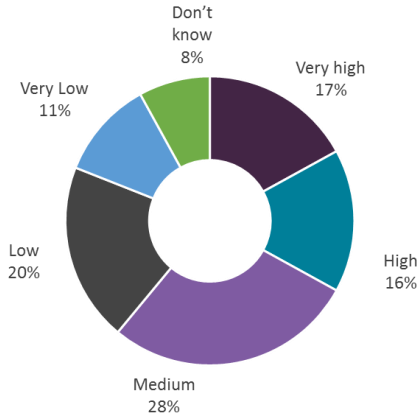


Q14. Share who agree definitely/probably true (%)	Gender		Age					Monthly Household Income			
	Male	Female	18-25 years	26-35 years	36-45 years	46-55 years	56 and over	\$0-100	\$101-200	\$201-500	\$501+
The virus can spread when an infected person touches someone's hand or face, kisses them, or sneezes or cough near them	98	99	98	99	98	99	98	99	100	99	97
Washing hands helps prevent getting it	99	99	98	98	99	99	99	100	98	99	98
Infected people may not show symptoms for 5 to 14 days	94	94	93	95	95	96	90	96	95	94	94
People who have recovered from it should be avoided to prevent spreading it	57	56	61	50	56	57	63	72	58	56	52

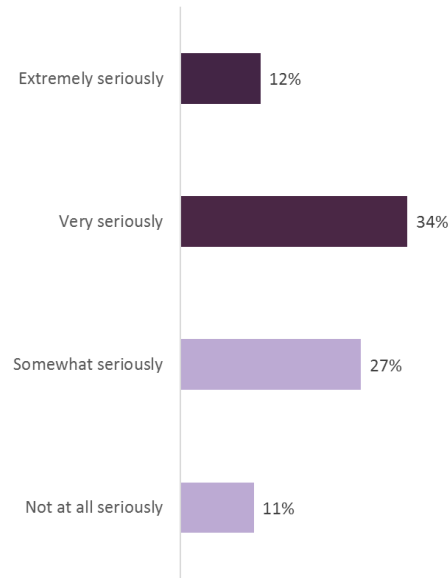
71% of Moroccans believe that COVID-19 poses a big problem for their country; 33% see themselves at very high or high risk of catching COVID-19.

- Most Moroccans think that the coronavirus will be a problem for Morocco (71%, including 64% thinking it will become 'a big problem').
- One in three feel they are at high risk of catching the coronavirus (33%, including 17% 'very high' risk) and a similar proportion believe they are at a low risk (31%, including 11% 'very low'). Those in Casablanca are more likely to feel at high risk compared with those in Rabat.
- More Moroccans believe than not that infection would seriously affect their health (46% 'extremely/very seriously' vs. 38% 'somewhat/not at all seriously'). Older Moroccans are more likely to feel that their health would be seriously affected.
- Two in three of those who think the virus would not affect their health at all, primarily focus on being 'strong/healthy/young' (66%). Those who think their health would be affected somewhat, very or extremely seriously say 'I am at risk /old/preexisting condition' (35%) or 'it could kill me or make me very sick' (20%).
- Moroccans are very optimistic about receiving the help they would need to deal with the illness if they become infected – with four in five confident about being able to get immediate help compared to one in 10 of those not confident (80% vs. 11%).

Q5. Please indicate what you think your level of risk of catching coronavirus or Covid-19 is?



Q6. If you were infected by coronavirus or Covid-19, how seriously do you think it would affect your health?

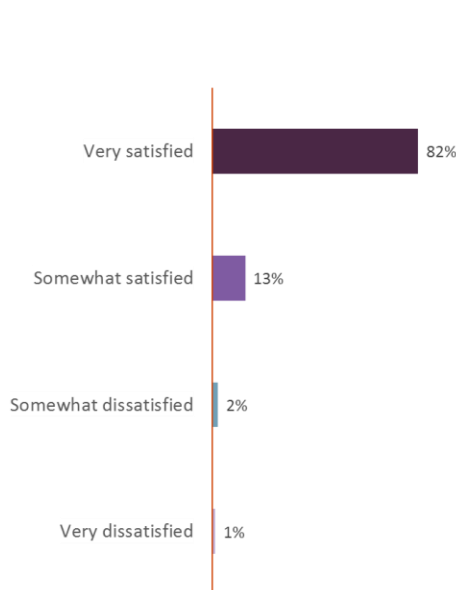


% who think coronavirus would affect their health extremely seriously/very seriously:	
Gender:	
Male	43
Female	49
Age:	
18-25 years	37
26-35 years	44
36-45 years	46
46-55 years	49
56 and older	60
Monthly Household Income:	
\$0-100	53
\$101-200	42
\$201-500	47
\$501+	42

Moroccans' perceptions of the governmental response to COVID-19 is broadly positive

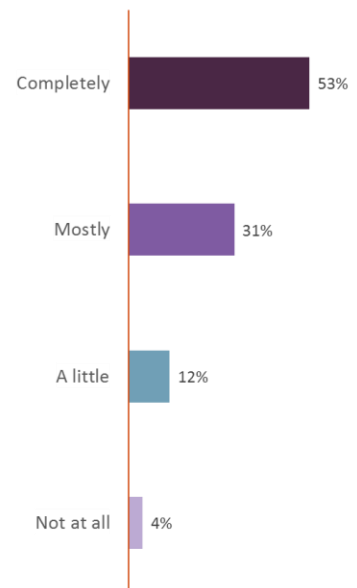
- Satisfaction with the government's response is almost universal in Morocco (96% vs. 4% dissatisfied).
- Moroccans are also more likely than not to trust the information provided by the government – albeit less so than the level of satisfaction with the government's response might suggest (83%, including 53% 'completely' trust vs. 16%, including 4% 'not at all').

Q12. How satisfied are you with the government's response to coronavirus or Covid-19?



% who are very/somewhat satisfied with government's response :	
Gender:	
Male	93
Female	98
Age:	
18-25 years	95
26-35 years	96
36-45 years	95
46-55 years	96
56 and older	95
Monthly Household Income	
\$0-100	97
\$101-200	97
\$201-500	96
\$501+	95

Q13. How much do you trust information from the government about the coronavirus or Covid-19?



Support for personal public health social measures (PHSMs) runs high

- Almost all Moroccans support stopping handshake/kiss greetings (98%); requiring those who have contact with infected people to self-isolate (89%); and requiring those with COVID-19 to remain home until they are well (77%).

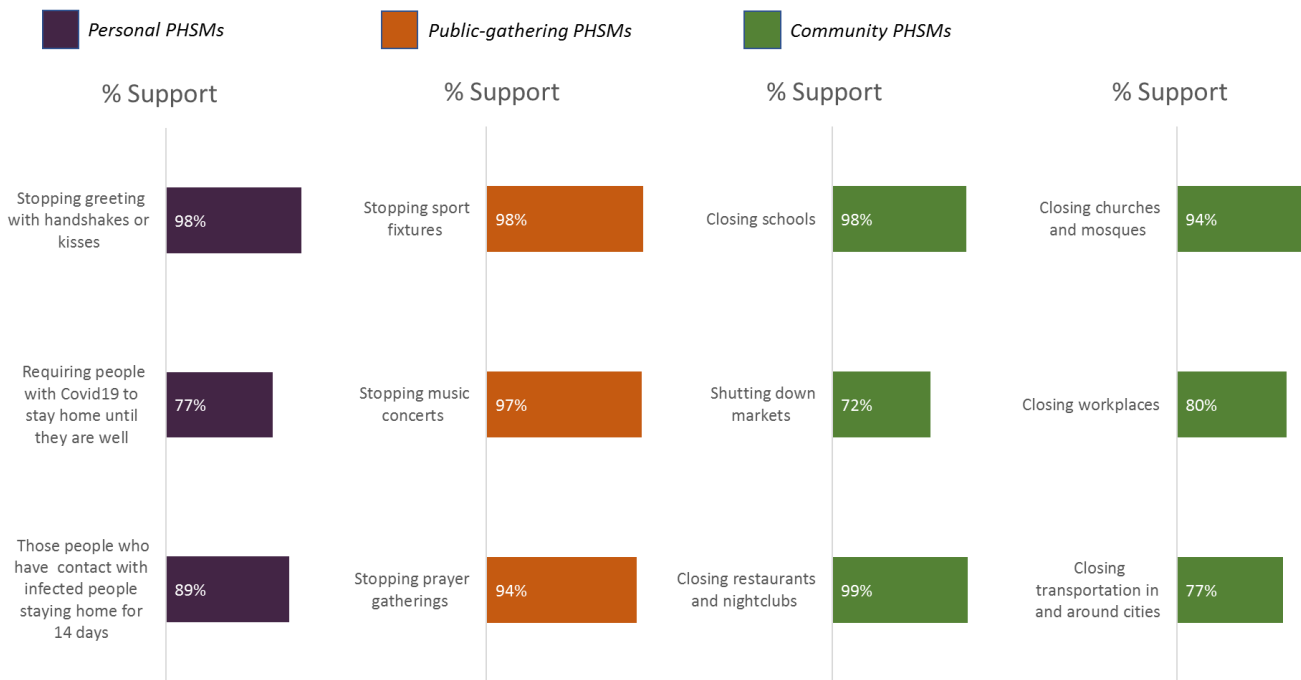
Moroccans also support restricting public gatherings

- Support is almost universal for restricting public gatherings to help limit a COVID-19 outbreak by stopping sports fixtures (98%); music concerts (97%); and prayer gatherings (94%). The majority say that stopping prayer gatherings would be made easier by TV/internet (74%) or radio broadcast (62%) and calls from a minister or imam (53%).

Most Moroccans also support other temporary ‘community PHSMs’ to help slow the COVID-19 outbreak

- This includes closing restaurants/nightclubs (99%); churches and mosques (94%); and markets (72%).
- The majority would support closing a city off for two weeks (94%); closing transport between cities (93%); and closing transport in and around cities (77%).
- Nearly all (98%) would support school closures. Of those with children, around six in 10 say they would have someone to look after them.

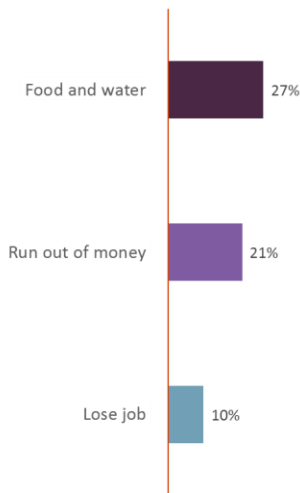
Level of support for Public health social measures (PHSMs) by type of intervention



PHSMs may place a significant burden on many Moroccans

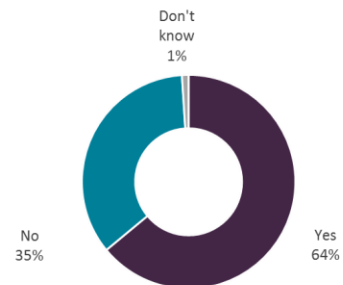
- Two in three have a separate room to isolate someone who becomes sick (64% - this increases as income rises).
- Asked about the biggest problems posed by staying at home for two weeks, one in three spontaneously say they do not know or nothing (35% - women and older Moroccans in particular); one in four talk about access to food and water (27%). One in five talk of running out of money (21%), while than one in 10 say losing their job (10%).
- If asked to stay at home, on median average, Moroccans would need to get food after 7 days and money after 15 days. Younger Moroccans as well as those with lower income feel they would run out of money sooner.

Q17: What would be the biggest problems for people like you to stay at home for 14 days?



Share who think the following would be the biggest problem... (%)	Food and water	Running out of money	Losing your job
Gender:			
Male	30	30	14
Female	24	12	7
Age:			
18-25 years	26	20	13
26-35 years	34	24	12
36-45 years	32	27	12
46-55 years	19	16	7
56 and older	18	10	4
Monthly Household Income:			
\$0-100	28	19	9
\$101-200	27	23	11
\$201-500	27	23	10
\$501+	29	17	11

Q38. Would you have a separate room in your home to keep someone isolated if they are sick?



TV along with social media are the main sources of information relied on

- Seven in 10 say they normally get their information on what’s happening in the country from TV (69%); with sizeable reach also coming from social media (40%). For local news, social media (36%) and TV (35%) also play an important role, supplemented by family and friends (17%)

Technical Note

The fieldwork on this study was conducted by Ipsos with results based on 1,045 interviews with adults aged 18+ in Casablanca (595 interviews) and Rabat (450 interviews). Fieldwork was administered by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) using a Random Digit Dial (RDD) approach incorporating both landline and mobile sample. Data are representative of the populations of the urban area (s) included and are unweighted. Fieldwork took place between April 1 and April 17, 2020.

This program of research is an outcome of a partnership between Resolve to Save Lives, an initiative of Vital Strategies, Africa CDC, the World Health Organization’s African Regional Office (AFRO) and Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO), and the World Economic Forum to form a new public-private partnership to support evidence-based implementation of PHSMs to reduce COVID-19 transmission in African countries (“flattening the curve”) while working with governments to mitigate social and economic disruption and other unintended consequences.