

Partnership for Evidence-based Response to COVID-19

Responding to COVID-19 in African Countries:

Executive Summary of Polling Results: Liberia

August 2020



INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact societies across health, financial and day to day life.

This document provides the findings from public opinion polls in Liberia to understand the public's knowledge, risk perception, attitudes, access to information, reactions, behaviors and practices related to COVID-19.

This Executive Summary is supplemented by an Appendix with the results should readers require additional detail.

METHODOLOGY

The public opinion polls were conducted in Liberia from 5 August to 16 August 2020. The polling was conducted by telephone.

Samples were drawn to be nationally representative of each Member State; weighting was applied by gender and region to align the final data with the population. The national unweighted sample size in Liberia is 1,366 interviews.



Key Findings



- PHSM support and adherence: While more than half of all respondents in Liberia support PHSMs, support for personal preventive measures is much higher than support for measures that restrict economic activity, and support for avoiding places of worship is particularly low. Almost two-thirds of respondents are in favor of reopening the country to restart the economy, but three out of four are anxious about resuming normal activity. Support for the government's response is also high among all respondents, particularly among those that reported receiving government assistance.
- Risk perceptions & information: Perceptions of risk and severity in Liberia are higher than the average in the region and among all surveyed African Union Member States, though still below 50%. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that following public health guidelines would help to protect themselves, as well as their families and communities.
- Essential health services: Major disruptions in health services were reported in Liberia, with nearly two-thirds of households needing medicines stating that they experienced difficulty obtaining them and three out of ten that needed health care reporting that they delayed or skipped a health visit. The greatest barriers to health care access were concerns about contracting COVID-19 and affordability. The most frequently forgone health service was malaria treatment.
- Economic burden & food security: Food security was a major issue reflected in both the survey and social media analysis, with 85% of survey respondents experiencing at least one barrier to purchasing food in the past week, and the same percentage experiencing a loss of income since last year. Only 3% of respondents reported receiving additional food assistance from the government.

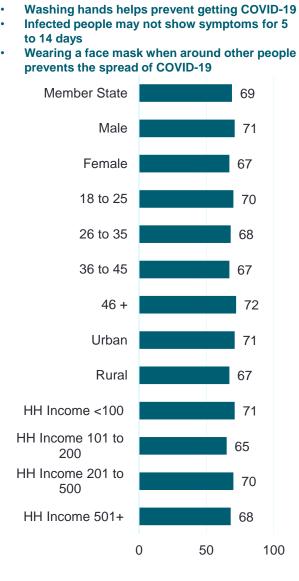
Information, Perception & Misinformation

PERC

Partnership for Evidence-based

Response to COVID-19

4



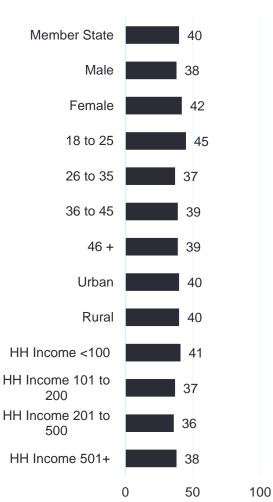
Preventive Measures

% True for ALL three statements:

Reaction to Recovered Patients

% True (one statement):

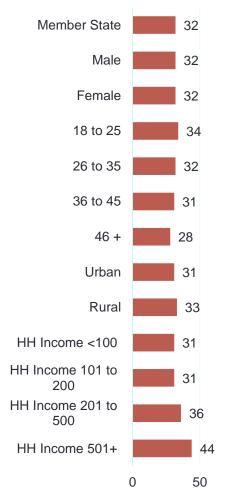
People who have recovered from COVID-19 should be avoided to prevent spreading it.



Misinformation

% True for BOTH statements:

- Foreigners are discrediting African medicines which could cure COVID-19
- Foreigners are trying to test vaccines on us



Q2. 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. If you don't know, say so. (True = Definitely + Probably True)

100

Risk Perceptions

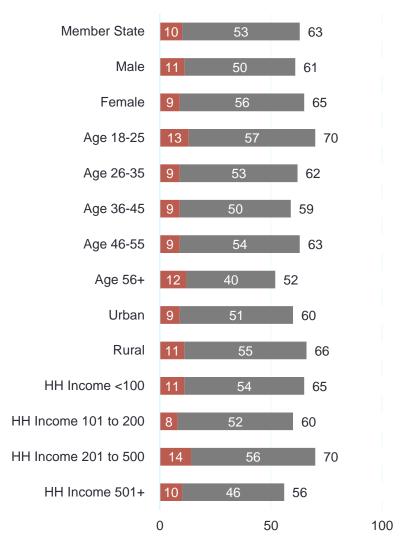
	ed lisk of catching CC
ر ب ن − ۳%	6 Very High ■ % High
Member State	17 16 33
Male	18 15 33
Female	15 18 33
Age 18-25	17 18 35
Age 26-35	17 17 34
Age 36-45	17 13 30
Age 46-55	14 13 27
Age 56+	18 19 37
Urban	17 15 32
Rural	17 18 35
HH Income <100	17 16 33
HH Income 101 to 200	17 18 35
HH Income 201 to 500	17 19 36
HH Income 501+	13 22 35
	0 50

Perceived risk of catching COVID-19:



Perceived severity of COVID-19 on health:

■% Extremly Serious ■% Very Serious



Q9. If you were infected by coronavirus or COVID-19, how seriously do you think it would affect your health? Not at all seriously, Somewhat seriously, Very seriously, Extremely seriously, Don't know / no response

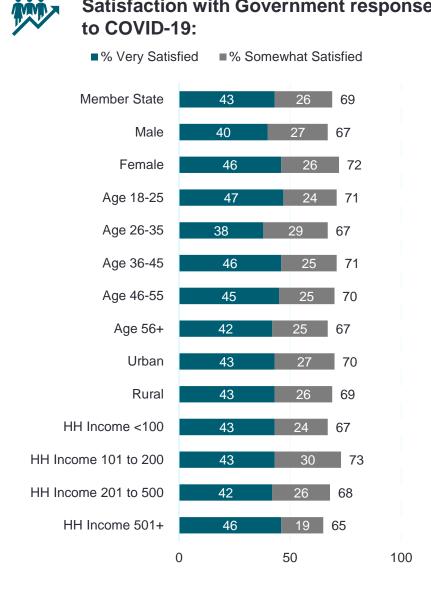
PERC
Partnership for Evidence-based
Response to COVID-19

5

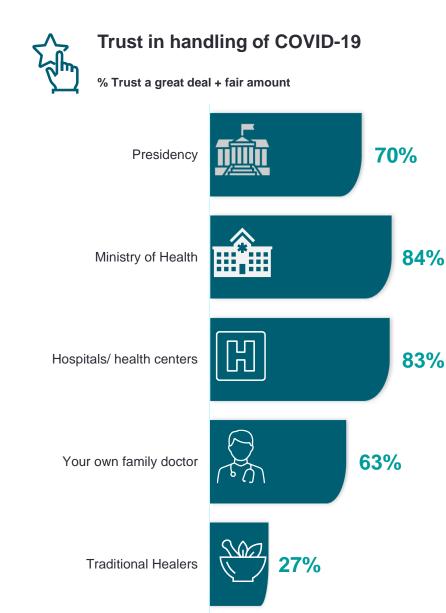
Q8. Please indicate what you think your level of risk of catching coronavirus or COVID-19 is: Very high, High, Medium, Low, Very Low, Don't know

100

Satisfaction and Trust with the COVID-19 Response



Satisfaction with Government response



Q12. To what extent, if at all, do you trust each of the following individuals and organizations' handling of the coronavirus in Liberia? A great deal, A fair amount, Not very much, Not at all, Don't know, Not heard of organisation, Not applicable.



Q11. How satisfied are you with your (Liberia) government's response to coronavirus or COVID-19? Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Somewhat dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied, Don't know / not sure

SUMMARY OF Public Health and Social Measures (PHSMs)

PERC

Partnership for Evidence-based

Response to COVID-19

7



	Adherence: level to which these activities describe "you personally"					Support: perception of necess		
	Completely applies	Mostly applies	Sometimes applles	Does not apply to me		Absolutely necessary	Somewhat necessary	Not really necessary
Wear a face mask in public when near others	67	21	10	2		89	9	2
Wash more often than they used to	61	25	13	25		93	6	1
Avoid handshakes and physical greetings	51	24	19	6		78	16	6
PERSONAL PHSMS: SUMMARY	60	23	14	11		87	10	3
Stop joining public gatherings and places of entertainment	48	24	19	10		64	25	11
Stop going to the church/mosque	22	16	28	34		26	28	46
PUBLIC GATHERING PHSMS: SUMMARY	35	20	24	22		45	27	29
Reduce the number of times going to the market or grocery store	26	26	36	12		42	38	20
Staying home instead of going to work, school or other regular activities	27	20	31	22		38	31	31
MOBILITY PHSMS: SUMMARY	27	23	34	17		40	35	26

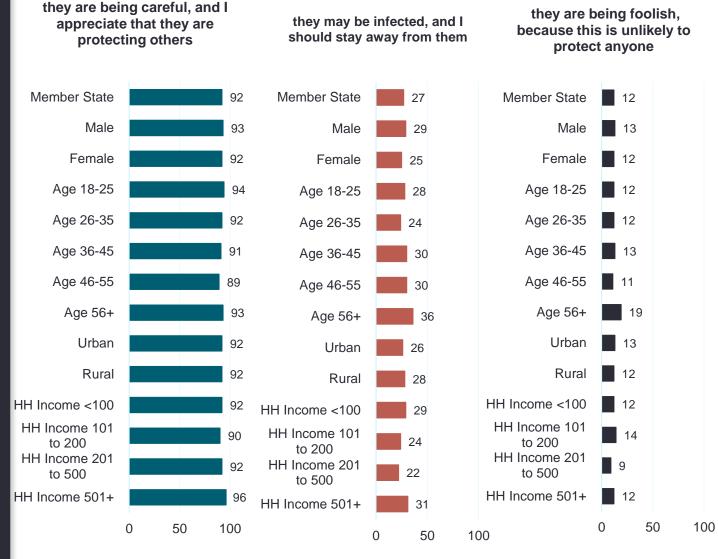
Please see Appendix for detail by country

Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Liberia?

Face masks: Perceptions, Use and Attitudes





B

98% have a face mask ready to wear

Adherence: Wear a Face Mask in Public Around Others: *Completely applies:* 67% *Mostly applies:* 21%

> Q4. Do you have a face mask of any kind that is ready for you to wear? Q13g. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: G) Wearing a face mask in public when near others

Q3. I would now like to ask your opinion about face masks, which some people are wearing at the moment. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Showing % agree (Strongly + Somewhat agree)

August, 2020

Impact on Health Care Services

Missed, Delayed or Skipped Health Care Services:

% Yes: (among those requiring services)	29%
People with longstanding illness	26%
Women	29%
Low Income (HH Income <100)	28%
High Income (HH Income 501+)	-
Urban	30%
Rural	29%

Base = require services (48%)

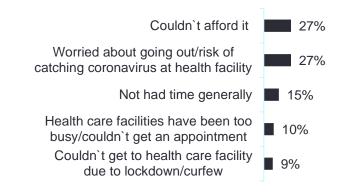


Difficulty accessing medications:

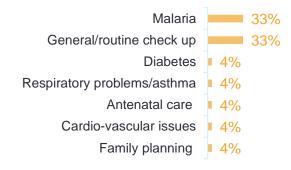
% Much More Difficult (among those requiring medications)	49%
People with longstanding illness	54%
Women	49%
Low Income (HH Income <100)	49%
High Income (HH Income 501+)	-
Urban	50%
Rural	48%

िक Rea

Reason for Missed, Delayed or Skipped Services:







Base = require medication (86%)

Q21. Have you or any other person in your household delayed, skipped or been unable to complete health care visits since the COVID-19 crisis?

Q24. Has the COVID-19 crisis made it more difficult to obtain medications you need for you or your household or has it had no impact? If you do not need medications, please say so.

Q22. Why have you or another person in your household delayed, skipped or been unable to complete health care visits since the COVID-19 crisis? Q23. And do you mind if I ask what those delayed, missed or not completed health care visits were for?



Economic and Food Relief Measures

	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	HH income < 100USD	HH income 500+
EXPERIENCED 'ANY' BARRIER ONE DAY OR MORE:	85	86	85	84	87	89	78
Experienced 1 day or more:							
had difficulties in going to food markets due to restrictions imposed	37	38	37	37	38	37	37
had difficulties in buying food due to most food markets being closed?	36	39	34	37	36	38	39
been unable to buy the amount of food you usually buy because of shortages in the markets	60	61	59	58	62	62	48
been unable to buy the amount of food you usually buy because the price was too high?	76	75	77	74	78	82	57
been unable to buy the amount of food you usually buy because your income has dropped?	68	71	65	67	69	71	61

Q17. In the past 7 days, how many days have you or someone in your household experienced any of the following?

وربي	

Impact on Income: % Reporting Income is Smaller than last year	81%
Women	80%
Men	82%
Low Income (HH Income <100)	84%
High Income (HH Income 501+)	68%
Urban	82%
Rural	81%

Barriers and Difficulties Purchasing Food

Q18. How does the amount of money you made in the past 7 days compare to the amount you made this time last year? Is it... Bigger, Smaller, Stayed the Same, Don't make any, Don't know.

Impact on Unpaid work: % Reporting More Hours on Unpaid Work	59%
Women	63%
Men	56%
Low Income (HH Income <100)	61%
High Income (HH Income 501+)	67%
Urban	60%
Rural	59%

Q19. Since the crisis began, have you had a change in your hours spent on unpaid work, such as childcare, care of the elderly and housework? More hours, less hours, no change in hours, don't know.



Concerns about resuming normal activities

Female	60	19 79
Age 18-25	58	15 73
Age 26-35	56	21 77
Age 36-45	48	28 76
Age 46-55	56	19 75
Age 56+	59	24 83
Urban	52	22 74
Rural	58	20 78
HH Income <100	54	23 77
HH Income 101 to 200	60	16 76
HH Income 201 to 500	55	15 70
HH Income 501+		
	0	50 100

Thinking about resuming normal

me feel very anxious

■ % Strongly Agree

Male

Member State

activities after the lockdown makes

55

50

■% Somewhat Agree

21 76

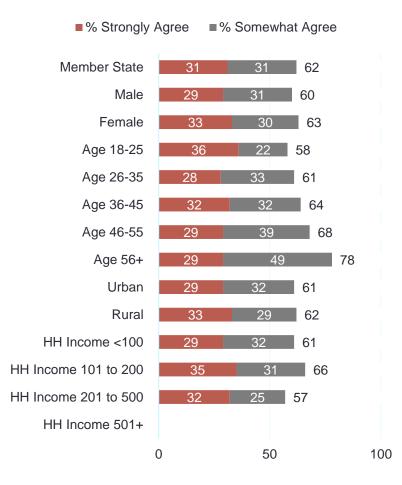
23

73

~}}/~



I would feel comfortable taking public transportation such as local buses or trains if it was not too busy



Q15. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Q15. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements?

August, 2020

Expectations about COVID-19

Too Much Risk	Need to get Economy Moving					
Member State	36	62				
Male	37	61				
Female	34	64				
Age 18-25	35	63				
Age 26-35	34	64				
Age 36-45	38	59				
Age 46-55	36	64				
Age 56+	42	55				
Urban	37	61				
Rural	34	63				
HH Income <100	35	62				
HH Income 101 to 200	31	68				
HH Income 201 to 500	34	65				
HH Income 501+	34	64				
	0	50	100			

Loosening Restrictions: "too risky to loosen

restrictions" versus "there is a low risk and

. . .

need to get economy moving"

. .

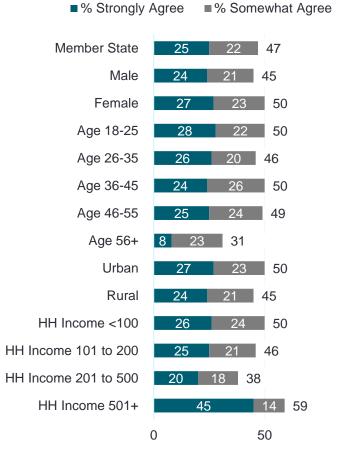
. . . .

0

Q16. Some people say that loosening restrictions now puts too many people at risk of contracting COVID-19 and we need to wait at least a few more weeks. Other people say that the health risk is minimal if people follow social distancing rules and we need to get the economy moving again. Which is closer to your point of view?



It will be at least six months before COVID-19 is contained



Q15. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements?



August, 2020

100

For more information, contact:

Stephanie Salyer, DVM, MPH Africa-CDC stephanies@africa-union.org Nandita Murukutla, PhD Vital Strategies nmurukutla@vitalstrategies.org



Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19

Additional Methodology Details

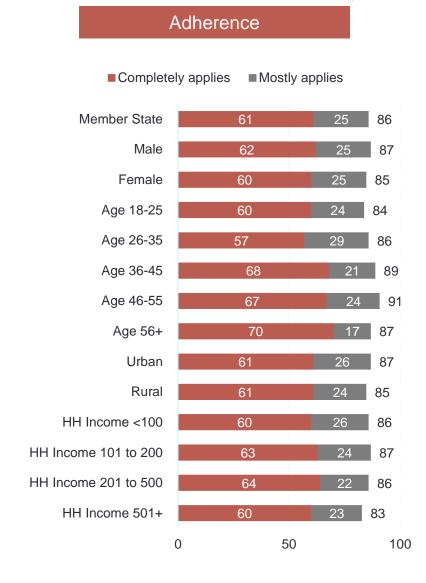
- The public opinion polling was conducted using a telephone interviewing methodology.
- The questionnaire was developed by Resolve to Save Lives, Ipsos and members of the PERC consortium.
- The polling program was approved by local review boards and all respondents gave explicit permission to participate in the polling.
- Note that where referenced, income categories should be interpreted as indicative as sample sizes vary and income reporting can be subject to bias.
- The weighted sample sizes for the demographic breaks in this report are as follows:

	Total	Male	Female	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56+	Urban	Rural	Under 100	101 - 200	201 - 500	501+
Base: All	1200	603	597	360	468	219	106	47	614	586	707	246	102	51

The percentages reported in this document may be different from percentages reported in other PERC products and communication of this data. Differences may be reconciled by investigating the denominator used, as indicated in each instance of use.
 PERC

Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19

PERSONAL **Public** health and social measure (PHSM)



Washing my hands many times per day

Absolutely necessary ■ Somewhat necessary Member State 93 99 6 Male 93 99 93 Female 5 98 Age 18-25 92 98 6 Age 26-35 93 99 Age 36-45 94 5 99 Age 46-55 95 2 98 Age 56+ 96 100 93 99 Urban Rural 93 98 HH Income <100 92 6 98 HH Income 101 to 200 95 99 HH Income 201 to 500 97 99 HH Income 501+ 92 99 7 50 100 0

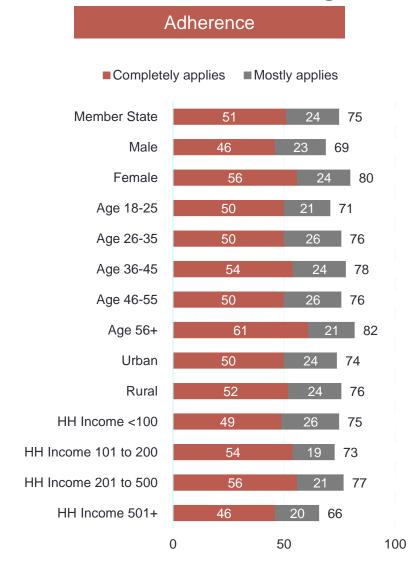
Support

PERC 15 Partnership for Evidence-based Response to COVID-19

Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Washing my hands with soap or using hand sanitizer many times per day

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Liberia?: ...wash their hands with soap or use hand sanitizer more often than they used to

PERSONAL Public health and social measure (PHSM)



Absolutely necessary Somewhat necessary Member State 78 16 94 Male 76 17 93 Female 79 15 94 Age 18-25 79 16 95 Age 26-35 93 80 13 Age 36-45 76 16 92 Age 46-55 93 71 Age 56+ 70 24 94 93 Urban 78 15 Rural 77 17 94 93 HH Income <100 77 16 HH Income 101 to 200 79 95 HH Income 201 to 500 80 15 95 HH Income 501+ 81 95 14 0 50 100

Support

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Liberia?: Avoiding handshakes and physical greetings



16

Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Avoiding handshakes and physical greetings

Avoiding handshakes and physical greetings

PERSONAL Public health and social measure (PHSM)

Complet	tely applies	■Most	y applies	
Member State		67	21	88
Male		65	22	87
Female		68	2(88
Age 18-25		65	21	86
Age 26-35		66	21	87
Age 36-45		71		21 92
Age 46-55		66	2	5 91
Age 56+		76		15 91
Urban		67	21	88
Rural		66	21	87
HH Income <100		68	20	88
HH Income 101 to 200		68	2	2 90
HH Income 201 to 500		65	23	88
HH Income 501+		66	20	86
	0	5	0	100

Adherence

Wearing a face mask in public when near others

Absolutely nec	essary	■Somewhat neces	sary
Member State		89	9 98
Male		89	9 98
Female		89	8 97
Age 18-25		90	8 98
Age 26-35		88	9 97
Age 36-45		88	10 98
Age 46-55		89	9 98
Age 56+		94	4 98
Urban		88	9 97
Rural		89	8 97
HH Income <100		89	8 97
HH Income 101 to 200		89	9 98
HH Income 201 to 500		91	8 99
HH Income 501+		86	10 96
	0	50	100

Support

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Liberia?: Wearing a face mask in public



Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Wearing a face mask in public when near others

PUBLIC GATHERING Public health and social measure (PHSM)

Completely applies Mostly applies				
Member State	22	16	38	
Male	23	16	39	
Female	22	16	38	
Age 18-25	22	15	37	
Age 26-35	21	18	39	
Age 36-45	24	16	40	
Age 46-55	24	13	37	
Age 56+	25	17	42	
Urban	21	17	38	
Rural	24	15	39	
HH Income <100	23	17	40	
HH Income 101 to 200	21	15	36	
HH Income 201 to 500	27	13	40	
HH Income 501+	24	9 3	33	
	0		50	

Adherence

Avoiding the church/mosque

100

-	Sup	oport	
Absolutely ne	cessary	■Somewhat necessa	ry
Member State	26	28 54	
Male	26	32 58	
Female	26	23 49	
Age 18-25	27	28 55	
Age 26-35	26	28 54	
Age 36-45	27	27 54	
Age 46-55	28	22 50	
Age 56+	20	33 53	
Urban	26	29 55	
Rural	26	26 52	
HH Income <100	25	28 53	
HH Income 101 to 200	24	28 52	
HH Income 201 to 500	30	29 59	
HH Income 501+	33	25 58	
	0	50	1

18 PERC Partnership for Evidence-based Response to COVID-19

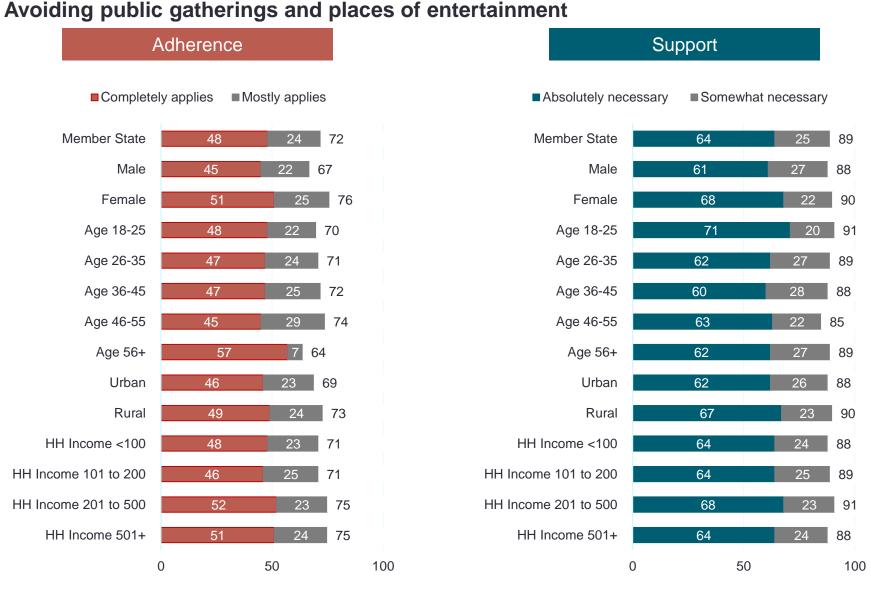
Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Avoiding the church/mosque

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Liberia?: Avoiding the church/mosque

PUBLIC GATHERING **Public** health and social measure (PHSM)

Completely applies Mostly applies			
Member State	48	24 72	
Male	45	22 67	
Female	51	25 76	
Age 18-25	48	22 70	
Age 26-35	47	24 71	
Age 36-45	47	25 72	
Age 46-55	45	29 74	
Age 56+	57	7 64	
Urban	46	23 69	
Rural	49	24 73	
HH Income <100	48	23 71	
HH Income 101 to 200	46	25 71	
HH Income 201 to 500	52	23 75	
HH Income 501+	51	24 75	
	0 5	50 100	

Adherence



Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Liberia?: Avoiding public gatherings and places of entertainment



19 Partnership for Evidence-based Response to COVID-19

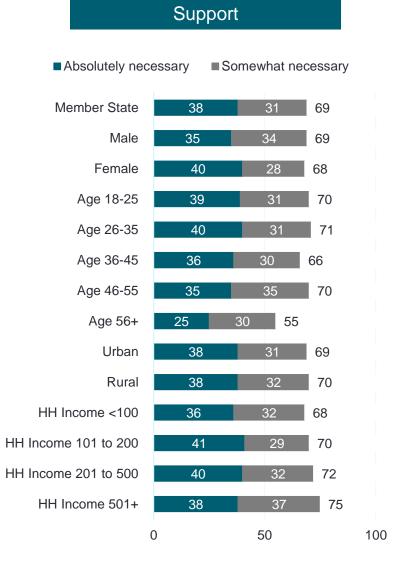
Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Avoiding public gatherings and places of entertainment

MOBILITY Public health and social measure (PHSM)

Completely applies		Mostly applies	
Member State	27	20 47	
Male	24	18 42	
Female	30	22 52	
Age 18-25	27	24 51	
Age 26-35	26	19 45	
Age 36-45	26	17 43	
Age 46-55	28	22 50	
Age 56+	36	10 46	
Urban	26	21 47	
Rural	28	19 47	
HH Income <100	27	20 47	
HH Income 101 to 200	25	19 44	
HH Income 201 to 500	27	15 42	
HH Income 501+	28	9 37	
	0	50	

Adherence

Staying home instead of going to work, school or other regular activities



20 PERC Partnership for Evidence-based Response to COVID-19

Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Staying home instead of going to work, school or other regular activities

100

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Liberia?: Staying home instead of going to work, school or other regular activities

MOBILITY Public health and social measure (PHSM)

	Adherence		
Complet	etely applies ■Mostly applie		
Member State	26	26	52
Male	27	23	50
Female	26	28	54
Age 18-25	28	24	52
Age 26-35	25	26	51
Age 36-45	29	22	51
Age 46-55	22	31	53
Age 56+	27	32	59
Urban	25	28	53
Rural	28	23	51
HH Income <100	25	25	50
HH Income 101 to 200	25	28	53
HH Income 201 to 500	32	17	49
HH Income 501+	43	1	5 58
	0	5	0

Reducing the number of times I go to the market or grocery store

■ Somewhat necessary Absolutely necessary Member State 80 42 38 Male 40 40 80 Female 44 37 81 Age 18-25 79 43 36 Age 26-35 42 40 82 Age 36-45 42 80 Age 46-55 77 36 41 Age 56+ 40 78 38 Urban 37 80 43 Rural 41 80 HH Income <100 79 40 39 HH Income 101 to 200 44 83 HH Income 201 to 500 42 80 HH Income 501+ 91 61 0 50 100

Support

21 Perconstruction Perconstruc

Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Reducing the number of times I go to the market or grocery store

100

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Liberia?: Reducing the number of times I go to the market or grocery store