

Partnership for Evidence-based Response to COVID-19 (PERC)

As soon as the first cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) were announced in Africa, African Union (AU) Member States responded quickly with public health and social measures (PHSMs)—the most effective tools for combating a rapidly spreading infectious disease in the absence of effective treatments or vaccines. A sustained response from AU Member States that saves as many lives as possible and minimizes the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 requires evidence-based policymaking.

The **Partnership for Evidence-based Response to COVID-19 (PERC)**, a consortium of global public health organizations and private sector firms, was created in March 2020 with the objective of providing AU Member States with real-time information and guidance to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the continent. *The initiative is funded by Resolve to Save Lives with support from Bloomberg Philanthropies and through private sector contribution from Ipsos.*

PERC Members and Partnership Roles

- **The African Union through the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC):** Provides overall technical and ethical oversight; data collection, analysis, and ownership; product review and final clearance; dissemination and promotion of PERC guidance; support to AU Member States to adapt PERC recommendations.
- **Resolve to Save Lives, an initiative of Vital Strategies:** Provides overall technical oversight and project implementation; development of PERC dashboard and analytical plan; implementation of: opinion polls, including survey design, data analysis and reporting; production of PERC reports and guidance; support to AU Member States to adapt PERC recommendations.
- **World Health Organization (WHO):** Provides technical leadership and capacity building support; ensures new evidence is quickly adopted by and shared among Member States. WHO will leverage the close links with a range of United Nations agencies at the country and regional level to use outcomes to promote multi-sectoral action to mitigate socioeconomic impact at the country and regional level through United Nations agencies.
- **UK Public Health Rapid Support Team:** Development, dissemination and promotion of PERC guidance; support to AU Member States to adapt strategy according to evidence.
- **World Economic Forum (WEF):** Provides overall project management support; partnership engagement; distribution of PERC guidance through WEF platforms.
- **Ipsos:** Provides survey implementation; collects “big data” related to population movement; development of the dashboard for PERC reporting.
- **Novetta Mission Analytics:** Provides analysis of traditional and social media narratives.



PERC Approach

PERC synthesizes and interprets social, economic, epidemiological, population movement and security data to help determine the acceptability, impact and effectiveness of PHSMs for COVID-19. PERC translates these findings into actionable guidance for AU Member States, particularly the Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), for operational strategy and planning. In particular, PERC analysis informs the development of risk communication and implementation of PHSMs. Data sources include official reports of cases and deaths, survey data, reports of government response measures, analysis of traditional and social media narratives, mobility data and reported security incidents. Data sources and project protocols are listed in the Annex.

PERC Projects

- **Public opinion polls:** Ipsos conducts public opinion polls in 19 AU Member States to understand the public's knowledge, risk perception, attitudes, access to information, reactions, behaviours and practices related to COVID-19. Trends will be studied across multiple rounds of surveys.
- **Mobility data:** Ipsos provides anonymous population-based mobility data that will enable AU Member States to understand population movement. The findings will inform response efforts to protect populations most at risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- **Traditional and social media narratives:** Novetta analyzes publicly available traditional and social media content to identify trends in conversations and narratives about COVID-19.

PERC Products

- **Interactive executive dashboard** for data visualization and analytics. Data streams will include social media analysis, mobile movements data, epidemiological data; survey data will be included when available (see appendix).
- **Biweekly reports** with analysis of the interdisciplinary data to guide decision-support.
- **Periodic regional reports and situational analyses for selected AU Member States** that contain the comprehensive analysis of data available via PERC and offer a forward-looking perspective on the pandemic in Africa.

Additionally, outcomes from the above projects will inform PERC partner policy guidance documents, risk communication materials, webinars, and public health technical support provided to AU Member States.

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Visit: <https://preventepidemics.org/covid19/perc/>

Annex: Data Sources for PERC

DOMAIN	SOURCES	METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS
EPIDEMIOLOGY AND TESTING	Africa CDC	Member States report to Africa CDC, which conducts routine event-based surveillance activities to monitor and collect verified epidemiologic and testing data daily. Updates are limited by the frequency of Member State reporting.
SENTIMENT	Novetta Mission Analytics traditional and social media analysis	Novetta Mission Analytics uses African media, geo-located African Twitter sources and human-curated aggregation of open source content to identify trends. Article- and quote-level metadata are then added based on a taxonomy for identifying message topics and sentiment.
PUBLIC HEALTH & SOCIAL MEASURES	Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker	OxCGRT collects publicly available information on 17 indicators of government responses. Data are collected from public sources by a team of over one hundred Oxford University students and staff.
PUBLIC HEALTH & SOCIAL MEASURES	ACAPS COVID-19 Government Measures Dataset	The COVID-19 Government Measures Dataset compiles all the measures implemented by governments worldwide in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Data collection includes secondary data review. Data are subject to retrospective additions and corrections. Linguistic barriers may prevent ACAPS from identifying all available information. Some measures are also extremely nuanced, so ACAPS relies on expert judgment for coding.
SECURITY	Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) Coronavirus-Related Events	The ACLED database catalogs conflict, security and protest activity by location, type (peaceful or non-peaceful) and actors involved. It includes a short description of each event that can be used to determine whether or not it is related to the pandemic.
RELIEF MEASURES	Social Protection and Jobs Responses to COVID-19: A Real-Time Review of Country Measures	A “living paper,” updated weekly, that collates and analyzes data on government social protection programs in response to COVID-19. Data are collected from public sources by a World Bank research team. The data are limited to public reports of new measures and may not be comprehensive or reflect the latest information about measures.
MOBILITY	Google COVID-19 Community Mobility Reports	The dataset shows how visits and length of stay at retail and recreation locations (including restaurants, cafes, shopping centres, theme parks, museums, libraries and movie theatres) change compared to a baseline (the 5-week period Jan 3–Feb 6, 2020.) The data is from users who have opted-in to location history for their Google account; this may or may not represent the exact behaviour of a wider population.
MOBILITY	Ipsos Mobility	Ipsos will use anonymized aggregate cell phone movement insights to analyze social behavior associated with COVID-19 at neighborhood level for nine cities. Using 2019 data, a baseline of “normal” behavior is established at neighborhood level. How many people frequent locations such as hospitals, churches, grocery stores, and other key facilities each day is determined.

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Data from pre- and post-outbreak in each country is then compared to establish how daily routines have changed at the neighborhood-level.

**PUBLIC
OPINION**

Public Reactions to
COVID-19: A 19-
Country Survey
Across Africa
(Ipsos)

Ipsos periodically conducts 1,200 interviews with adults aged 18 and above in each of 19 countries. Respondents are sampled by random digit dial incorporating landline and mobile phones for telephone fieldwork. The survey sample will cover urban and rural locations. Survey waves are planned for approximately June, August and October 2020.

Note: Our analysis is limited by the availability of data. Our data sources cover different date ranges updated at different frequencies. Some secondary sources are subject to delays and retrospective corrections. Findings reflect the latest available information at the time of analysis.