

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey

Trinidad and Tobago Summary Report | May 2020



535

Respondents



67 | 33%

Female | Male



42

Average age



4

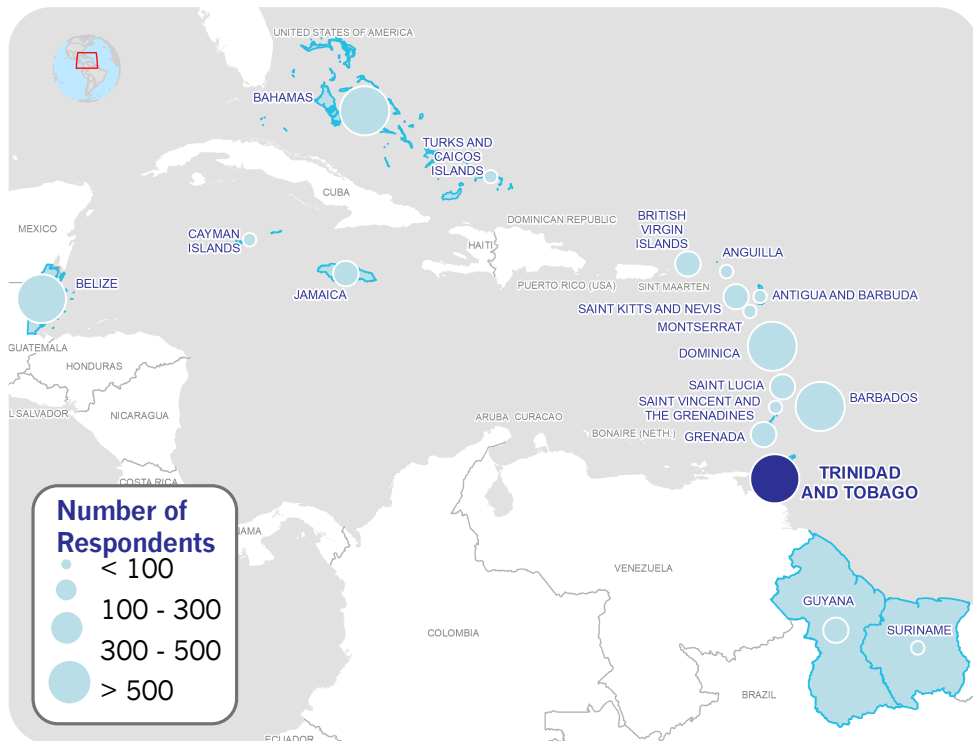
Average Household size

The COVID-19 pandemic is having far-reaching impacts on how people earn a living and meet critical needs. The Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey was launched by CARICOM to rapidly gather data on impacts to livelihoods, food security and access to markets. Prepared by the World Food Programme with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization, it received 4,537 responses from 19 countries and territories in the Caribbean. The survey was open from 1-12 April 2020 and was shared via social media, email and media.

Trinidad and Tobago summary findings

- Most respondents could access stores and markets, but 15% were unable to do so at some point in the week prior to the survey. Concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak were the main reason, followed by movement restrictions and closure of shops.
- While food items are generally available in stores, 66% the respondents reported an increase in food prices. Medicines appear to be less available than usual, but few people indicated they were unavailable.
- Over 80% of respondents changed their shopping behaviour to adapt to disruptions caused by COVID-19, primarily by buying larger quantities than usual. The vast majority reported having at least one week of food stock at home.
- Nearly a third of respondents changed their eating habits, mainly by eating less preferred foods, with some people skipping meals or reducing their food intake.
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents reported disruptions to their livelihoods, primarily owing to movement restrictions. Job loss or reduced income were reported by 40% of respondents, with women appearing to be slightly more impacted than men. Business owners were more widely affected than salaried workers.
- The vast majority of respondents predict that their livelihoods will be impacted in the future, with men and those with own businesses having a more pessimistic outlook.

While the survey contributes to a better overview of impacts, the data is not representative, and the use of a web-based questionnaire limits inputs from those without connectivity.

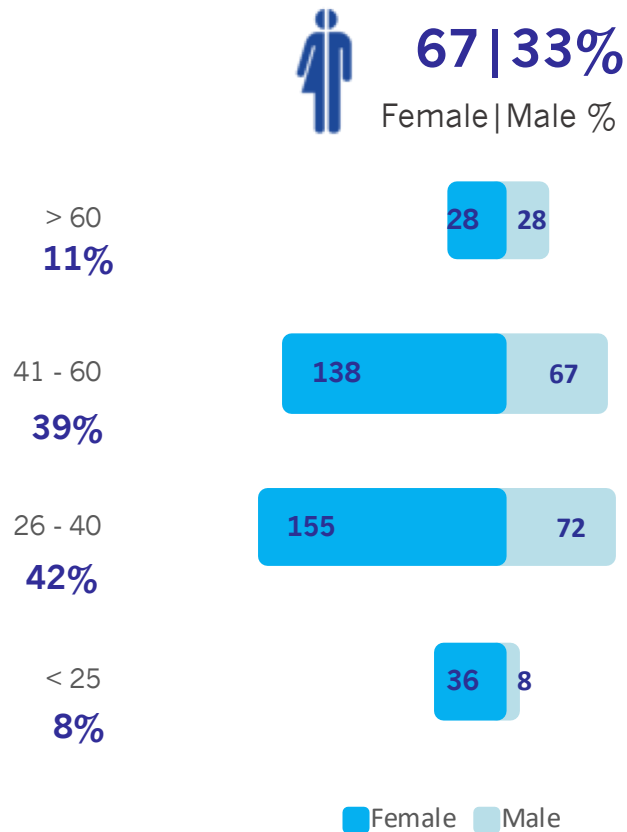


DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Age and sex breakdown of respondents

Age breakdown analysis will only be provided for the age groups of 26 – 40 and 41 – 60 due to sufficient responses in these categories.

Age and sex of respondents

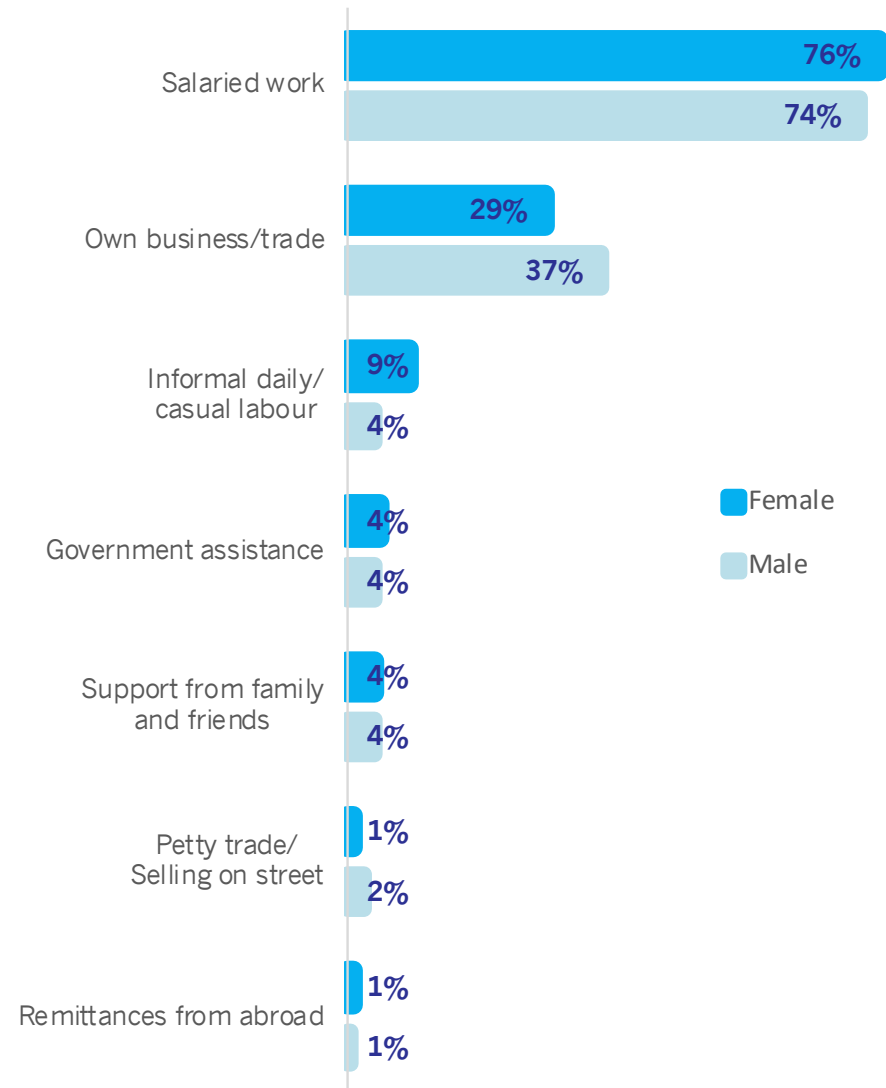


Main household income sources

Respondents were asked to indicate the main income source/s for their household. Disaggregated analysis will only be provided for salaried workers and those with their own business/trade due to sufficient responses in these categories.

Main income source | By sex

Multiple choices could be selected.



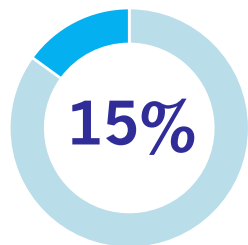
IMPACT ON MARKETS

COVID-19 has impacted peoples' access to markets, with 15% of total respondents reporting not being able to access markets at some point between March 25 and April 12. This was lower than the regional average (37%), suggesting that people in Trinidad and Tobago faced fewer constraints to market access in this period. Concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak were the main factor inhibiting market access, followed by movement restrictions and closure of shops.

People are altering how they shop, with 82% of respondents changing their shopping behaviour, mainly by buying larger quantities than usual. While staple and fresh foods were largely available, 34% reported that hygiene articles were only sometimes/partially available and 46% reported a partial availability of medicines. Very few people indicated that staple foods, fresh foods, hygiene items and medicines were unavailable.

Access to markets

Respondents indicated if there was a time they were not able to access the market during the time of the survey.



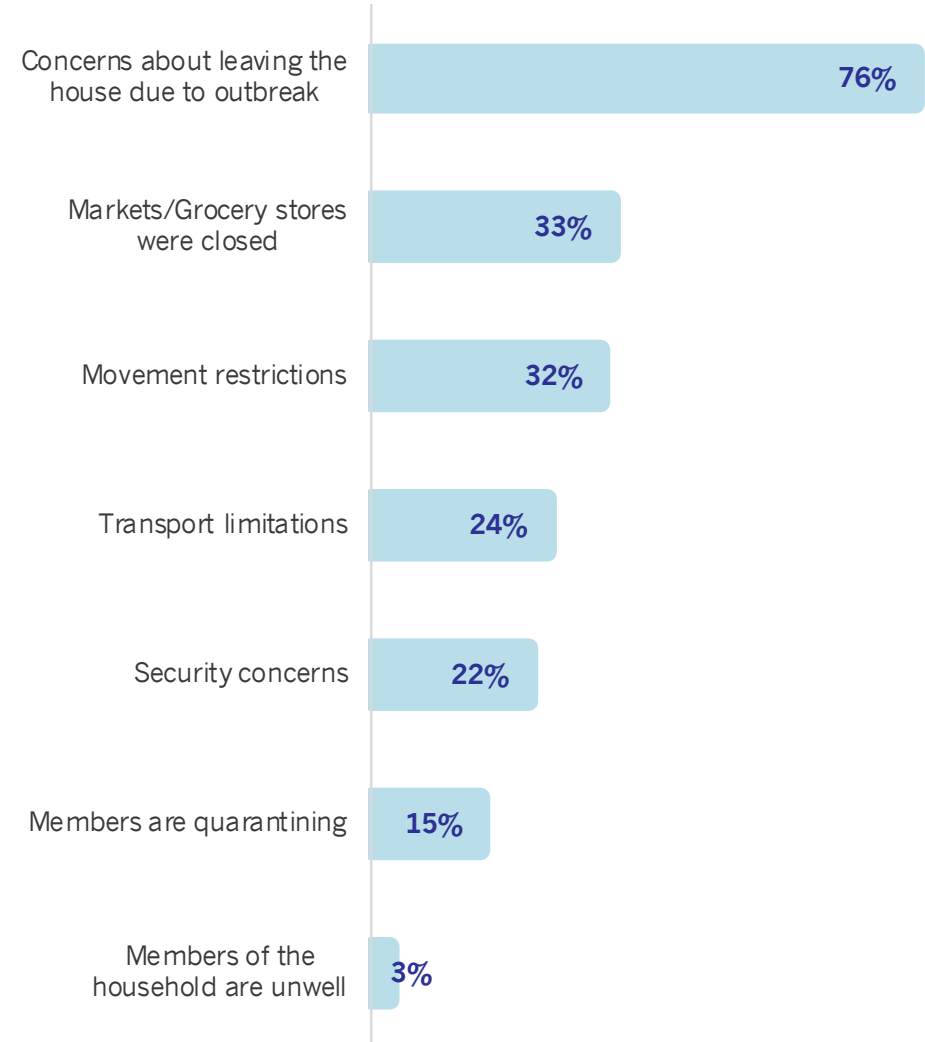
Reported a time when they could not access markets in the past 7 days

“Overcrowding and panic buying at supermarkets made it difficult to conduct my normal shopping. I had to visit multiple groceries and pharmacies to find items needed for my 4 month old baby”

“Fewer drives to the supermarket but buying more to avoid contact with others. “

For those that faced a time when they could not access markets in the past 7 days, the main reasons were...





Multiple choices could be selected.



IMPACT ON MARKETS

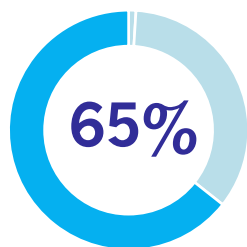
Availability of items in stores

Respondents reported on the availability of key items in stores.

	Staple Food 	Fresh food 	Hygiene 	Medicines 
Always Available	79%	69%	62%	39%
Partially/sometimes available	17%	25%	34%	46%
Not available	1%	1%	2%	2%
Don't know	3%	5%	3%	13%

Food prices

Respondents reported on any observed changes in food prices.



Observed an increase in food prices.
35% reported no change and
<1% reported a decrease

"We are still able to go to the supermarket and pharmacy. However we see the need to begin some small scale home gardening to supplement the household needs."

"Only buying what I need. I only go to one particular grocery ...which has sound heightened health protocols.... I have bought more goods from the local bakery closest to me. More snack cravings. Only things I have noticed out of stock are hand sanitizer and wipes. "

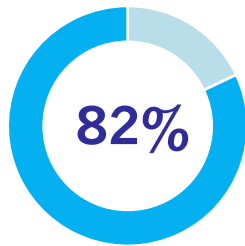


Key themes on how people in Trinidad and Tobago are being impacted and are adapting to disruptions from COVID-19

IMPACT ON MARKETS

Shopping behaviour

Respondents were asked if they have had to, and if so, how they have altered their shopping behavior.



Changed their shopping behaviour

Have you changed your shopping behaviour compared to usual? | By sex

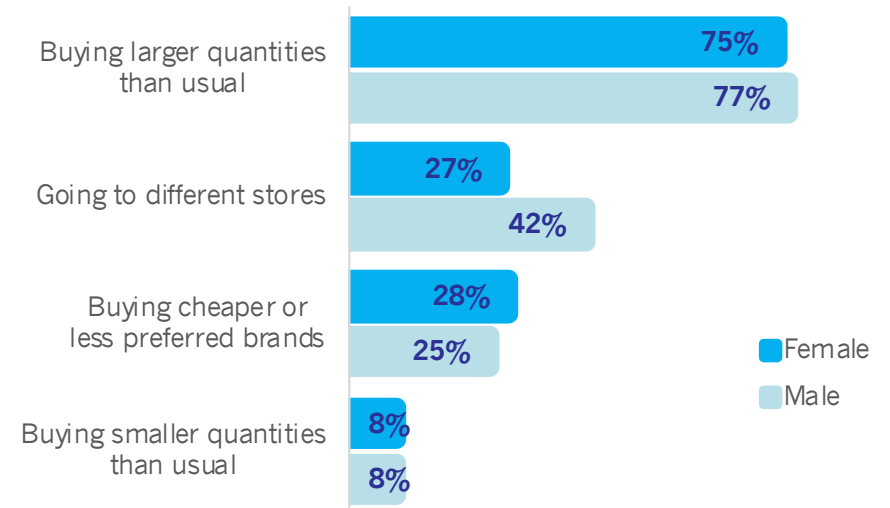


"I make one major trip to the supermarket for a month's purchase and fortnightly visits to the market. The market did require a wait though, since we had to line up and wait to be allowed in a little at a time."

"I have begun using neighborhood mini mart services instead of large supermarkets to avoid crowds and long lines resulting in buying less preferred items"

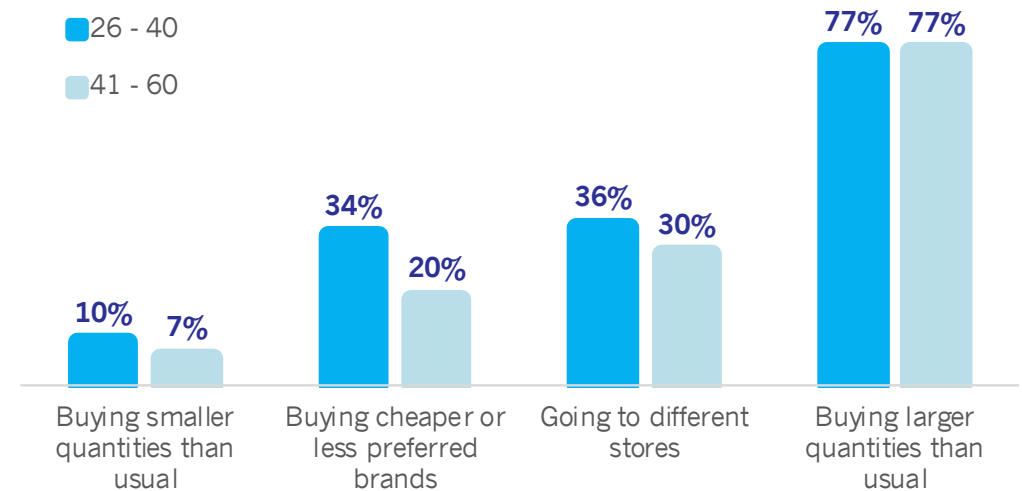
How respondents are changing their shopping behaviour | By sex

Multiple choices could be selected.



Have you changed your shopping behaviour compared to normal times? | By age

Multiple choices could be selected.



IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY

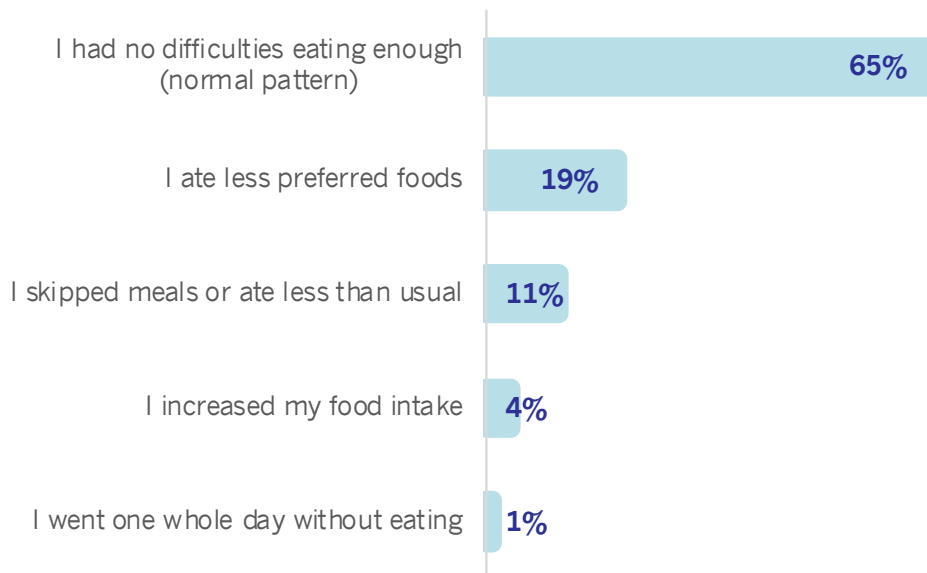
Food consumption is being impacted for about one-third of respondents. Nearly 20% of the respondents reported eating less preferred foods and 11% skipped meals or reduced their food intake. These numbers are close to regional averages. Trends between both sexes and age groups are consistent.

Nearly all respondents had food stocks at home, with 89% of households possessing food stocks of more than one week. There were no major differences between both sexes and age groups.

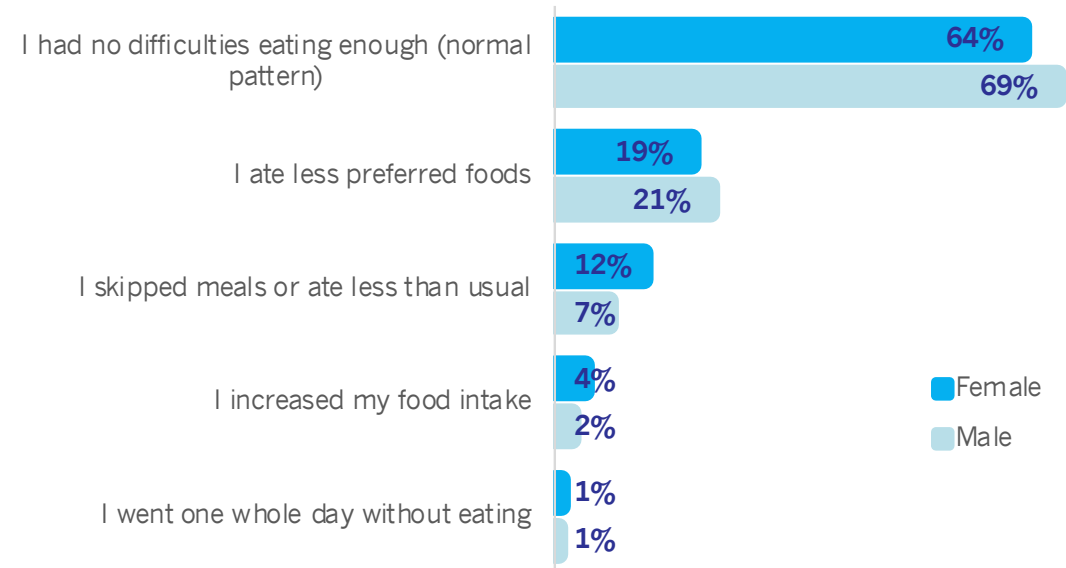
Food consumption

Respondents were asked to reflect on their food situation.

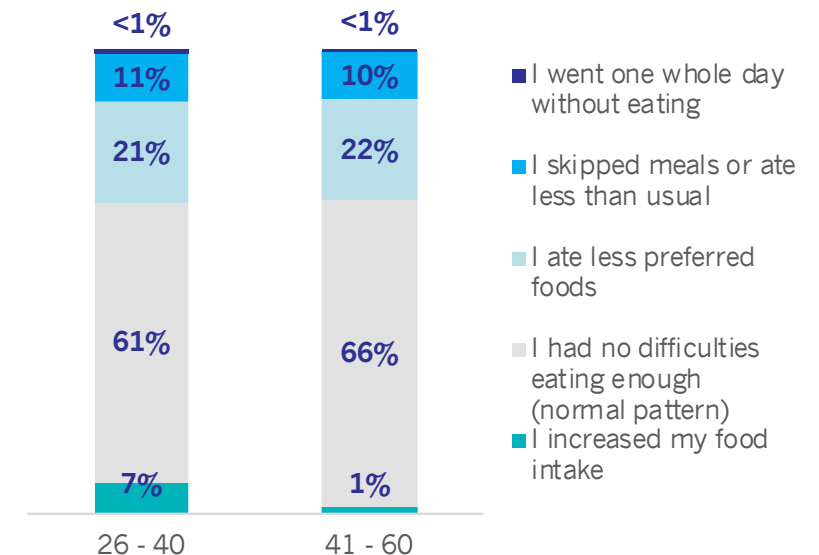
Which statement best reflects your food situation over the past 7 days?



Which statement best reflects your food situation over the past 7 days? | By sex



Which statement best reflects your food situation over the past 7 days? | By age

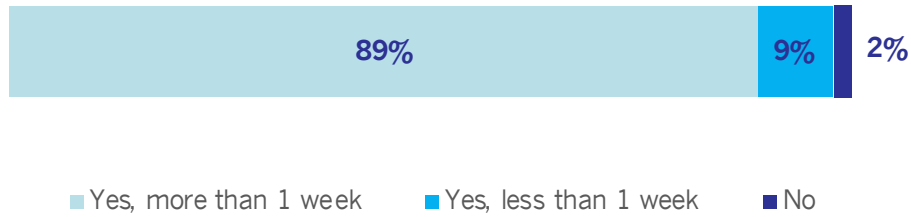


IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY

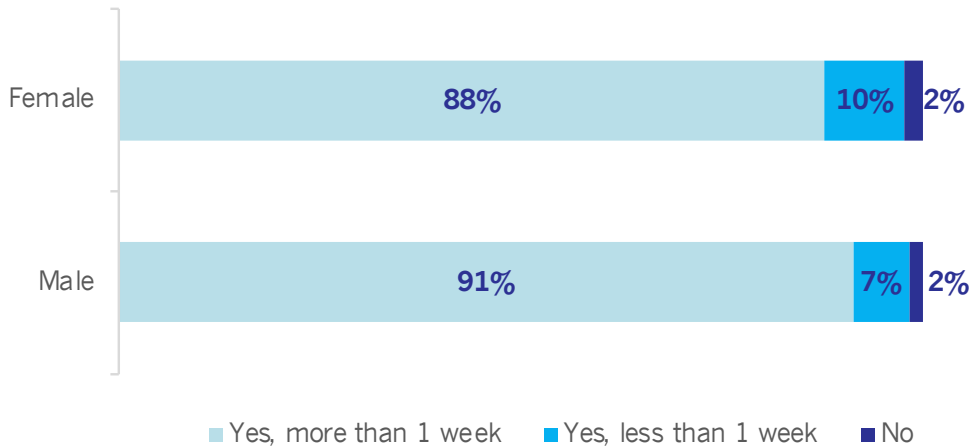
Food stocks

Respondents were asked to indicate the amount of available food stock for their household.

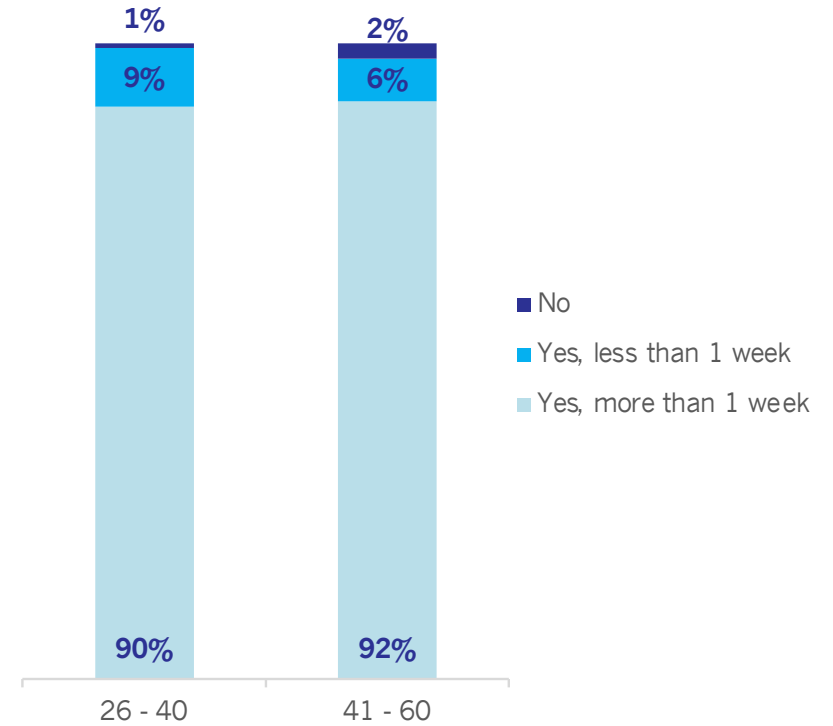
Does your household have any food stock?



Does your household have any food stock? | By sex



Does your household have any food stock? | By age



“Became more conscious of fresh food supplies. I have a small home vegetable garden. Working on expanding that “

“I envisage that imports will be harder to come by and hence further increase the cost of food at the supermarket. I intend to eat more locally produced food and market food. Also start a small kitchen garden for the basics.”

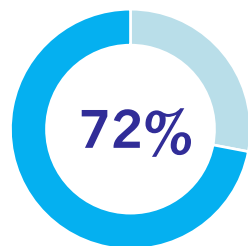
IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Livelihoods are being widely disrupted by the pandemic, primarily owing to movement restrictions. Over 70% of respondents have reported livelihood disruptions, which is in line with the regional average. Respondents in the 41-60 age group more frequently cited movement restrictions, unavailability of livelihood inputs and a reduced demand for goods and services as reasons for these disruptions. Business owners were more strongly affected by reduced demands for goods and services, transport limitations and a lack of markets to sell goods as compared to salaried workers.

Livelihood disruptions have translated into loss of income, with 40% of people facing loss of jobs or reduced salaries, which was reported by a higher percentage of women than men. Business owners (64%) were more affected by a loss of jobs/reduced salaries compared salaried workers (34%). The vast majority of respondents predict that their livelihoods will be impacted in the future, with men and those with own businesses having a more pessimistic outlook.

Disruptions to livelihoods

Respondents reported on any disruptions to their livelihoods.

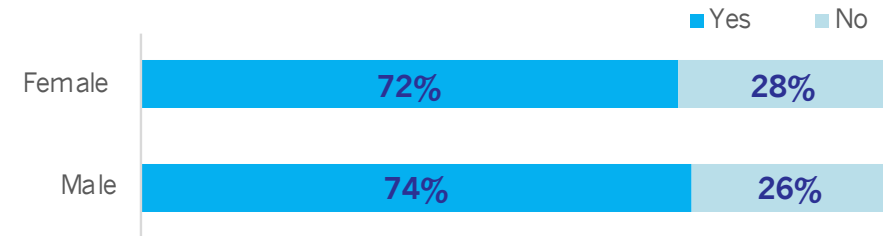


reported livelihood disruptions in the past two weeks

“Business affected due to social distancing negative sales as a result due to the fact our business requires events and gatherings.”

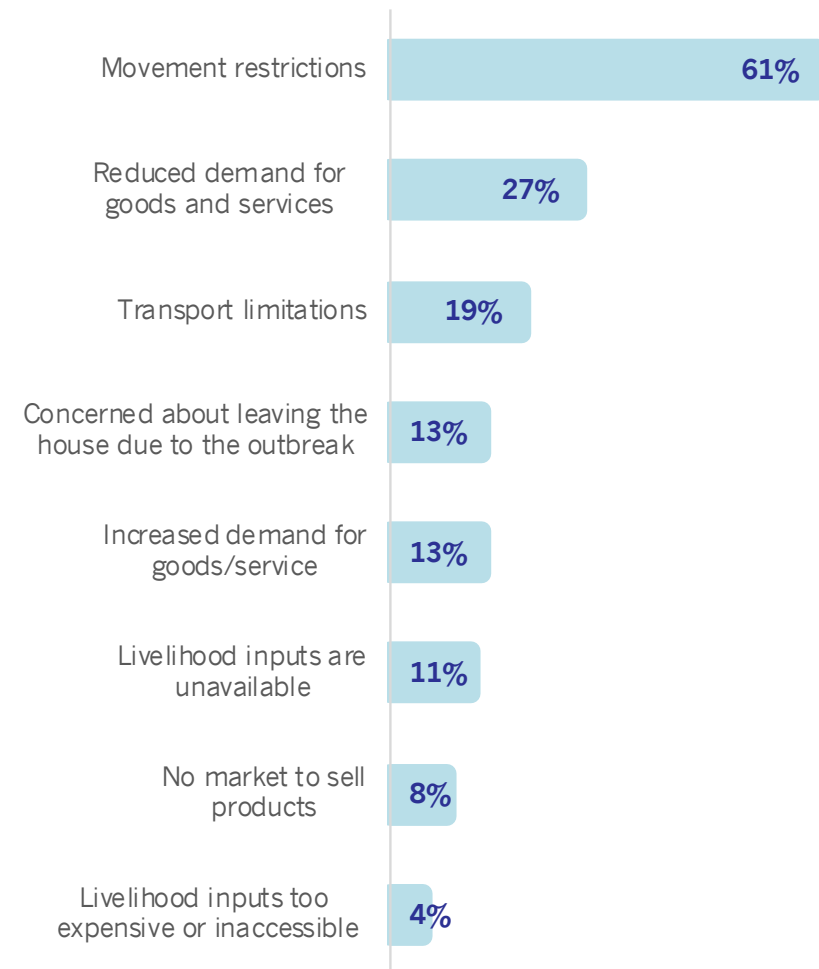
“Concern about maintaining business and paying employees and suppliers.”

Was your ability to carry out livelihoods activities affected in the past two weeks? | By sex



For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were...

Multiple choices could be selected.

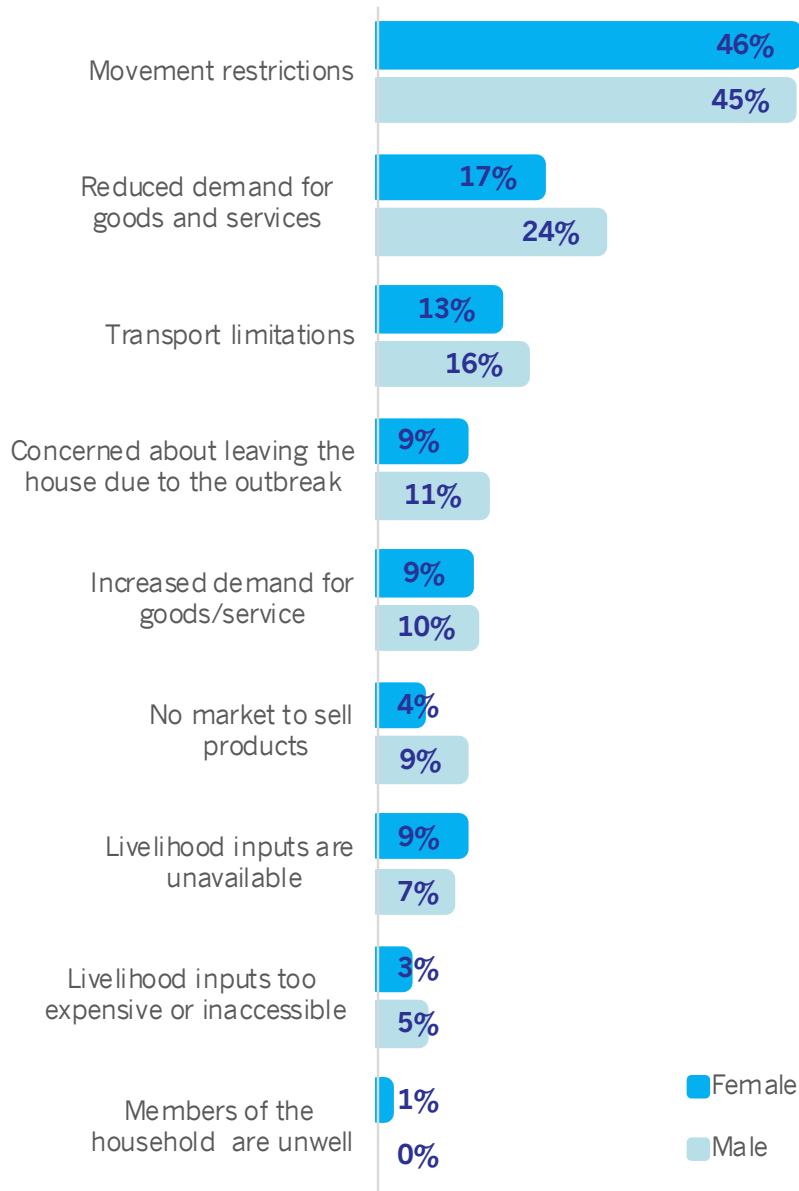


IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were...

| By sex

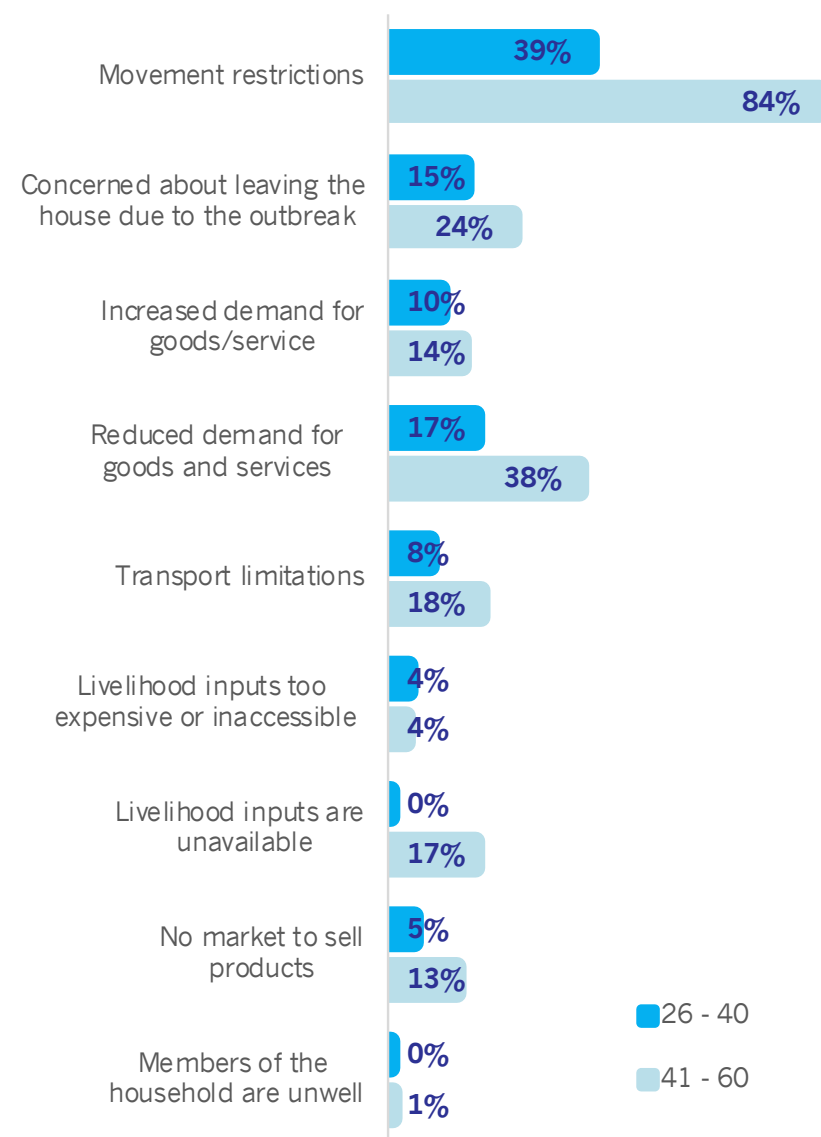
Multiple choices could be selected.



For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were...

| By age

Multiple choices could be selected.

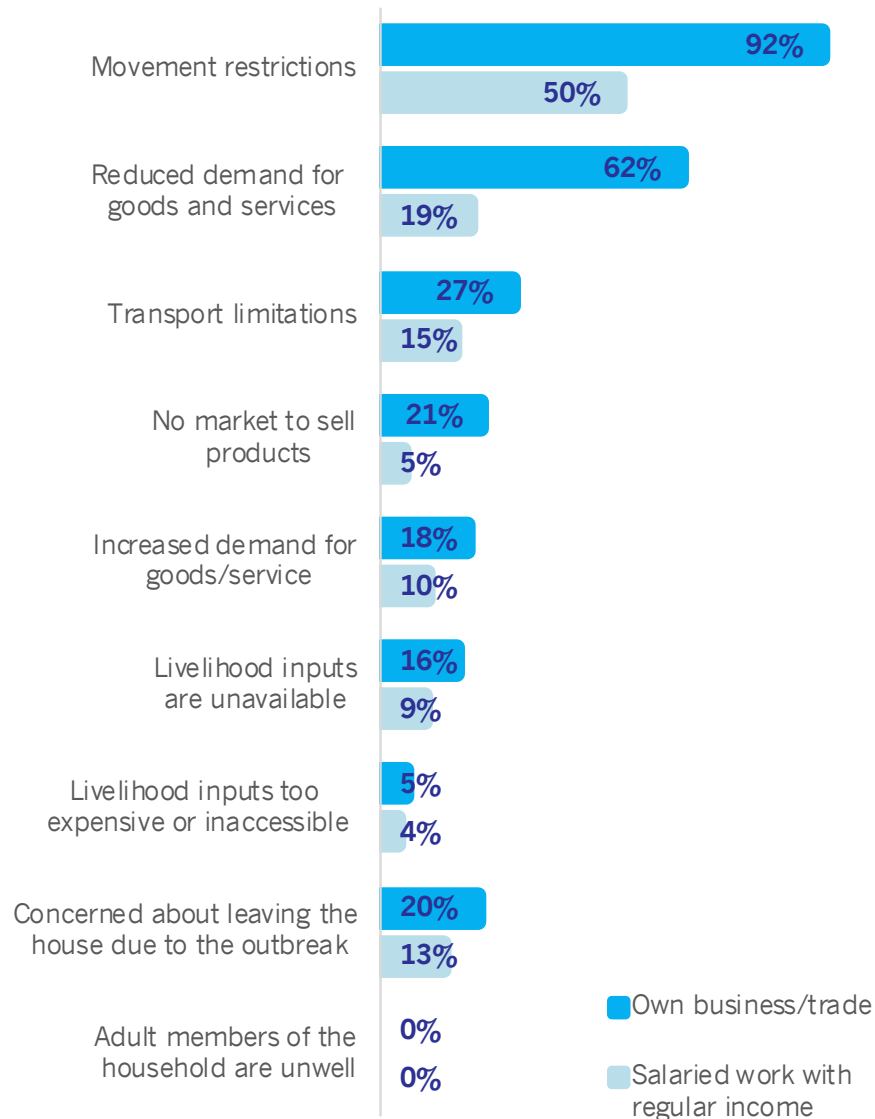


IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were...

| By income sources

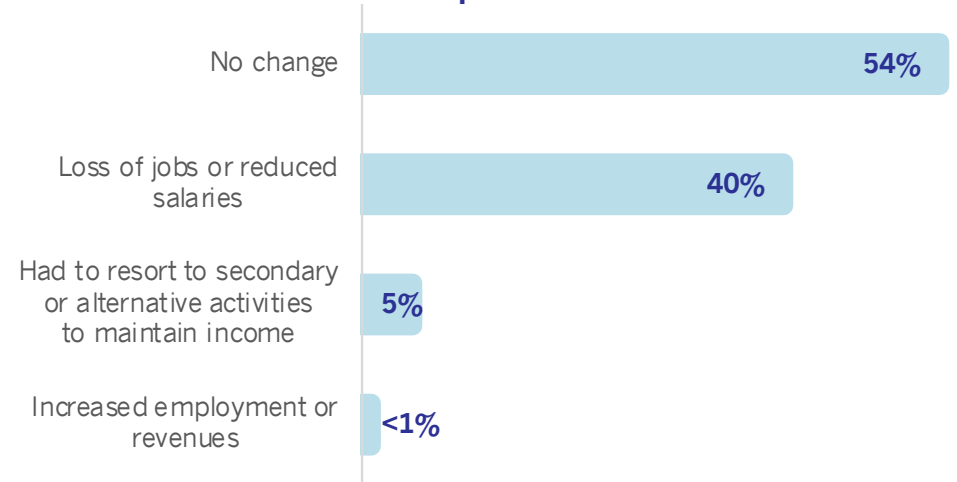
Multiple choices could be selected.



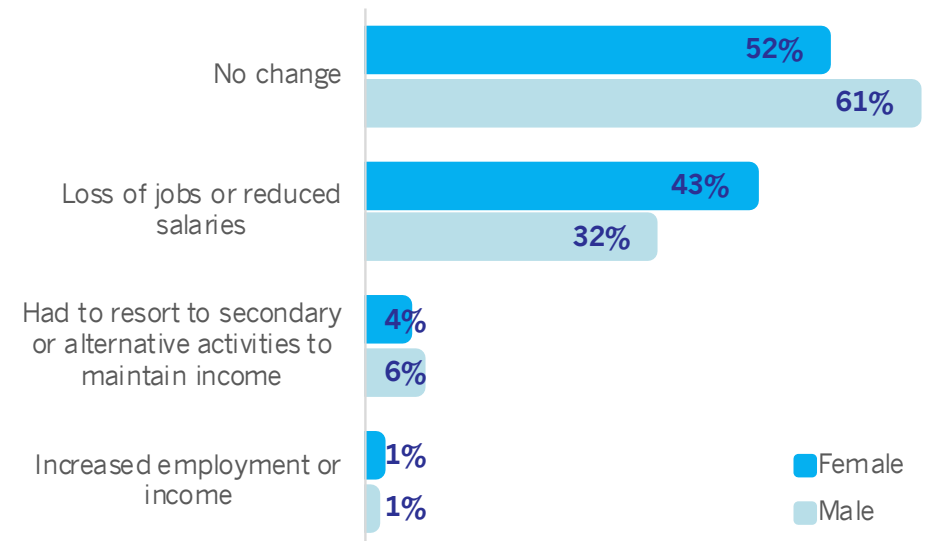
Income changes

Respondents communicated changes to their income in the past two weeks.

Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks?

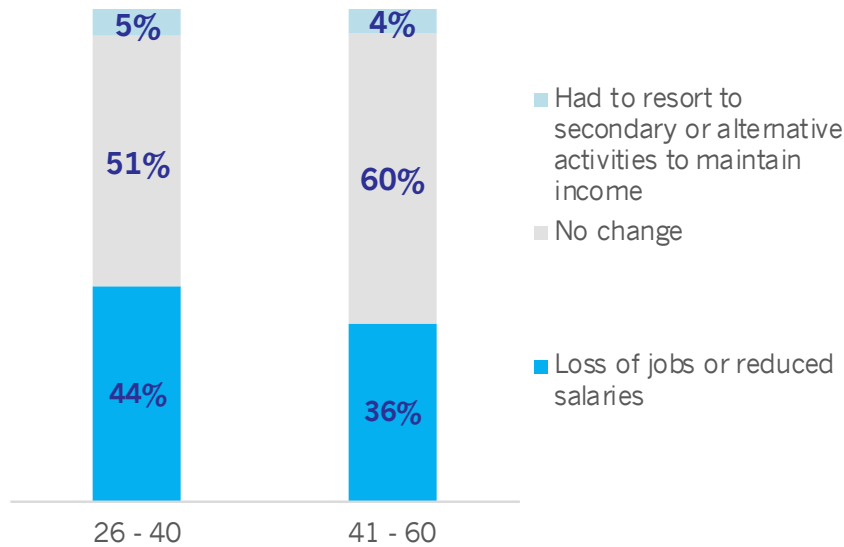


Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks? | By sex

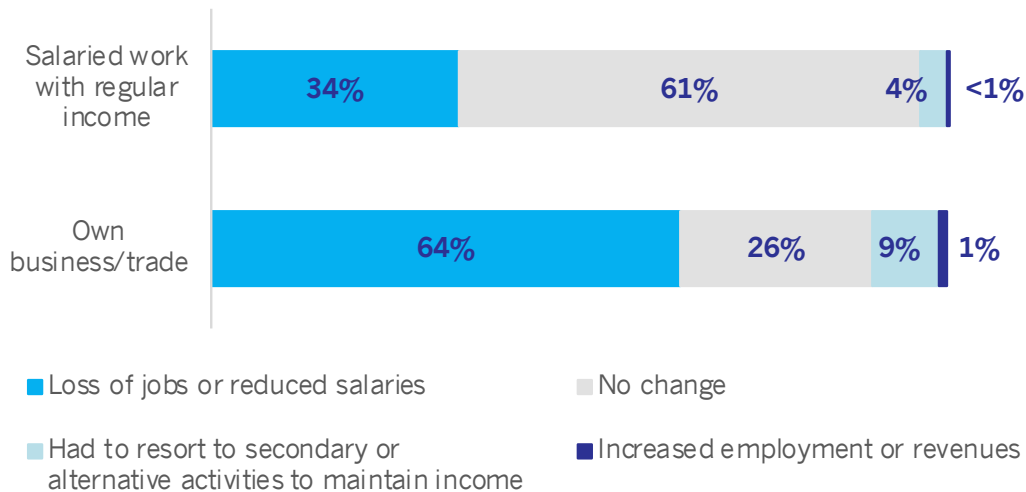


IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks? | By age



Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks? | By income source

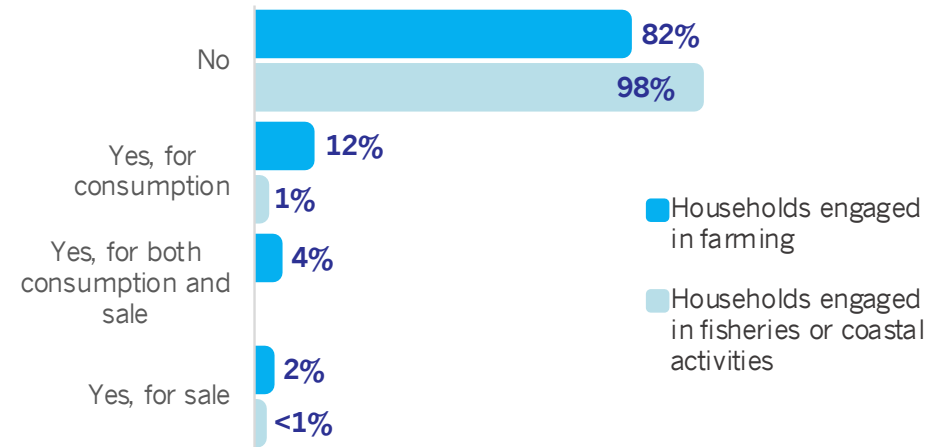


Households engaged in farming/fishing

According to the World Bank, agriculture, forestry, and fishing in Trinidad and Tobago contribute to 1% of GDP and 3% of employment. Trinidad and Tobago exports food to other countries in the Caribbean.

Given the limited number of respondents engaged in farming (particularly for sale) and fishing/coastal activities, more assessment and analysis on their constraints will be important to gauge how farmers and fisherfolk are being impacted by COVID-19.

Households engaged in fisheries and farming



"Can not go to work. I am self employed and if I don't work I don't get paid. Started a vegetable garden to de-stress as well as provide food."

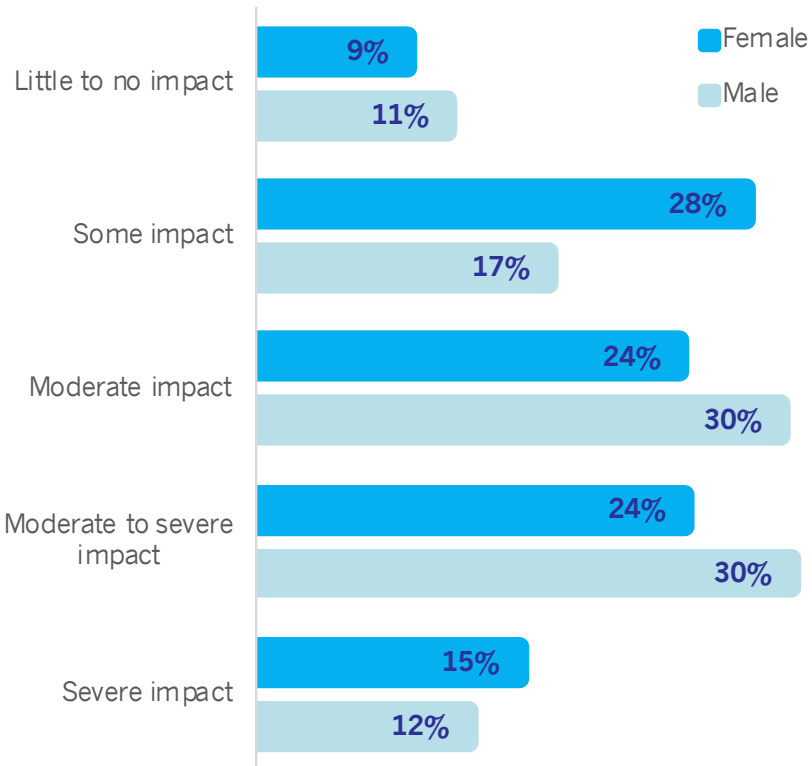
"It has been very disruptive in my family's day to day life concern of what is next in terms of livelihood finances and payments of bills the uncertainty is the worst part "

IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Future livelihood impacts

Respondents were asked to look ahead and predict the level of impact to their livelihoods as a result of disruptions from COVID-19.

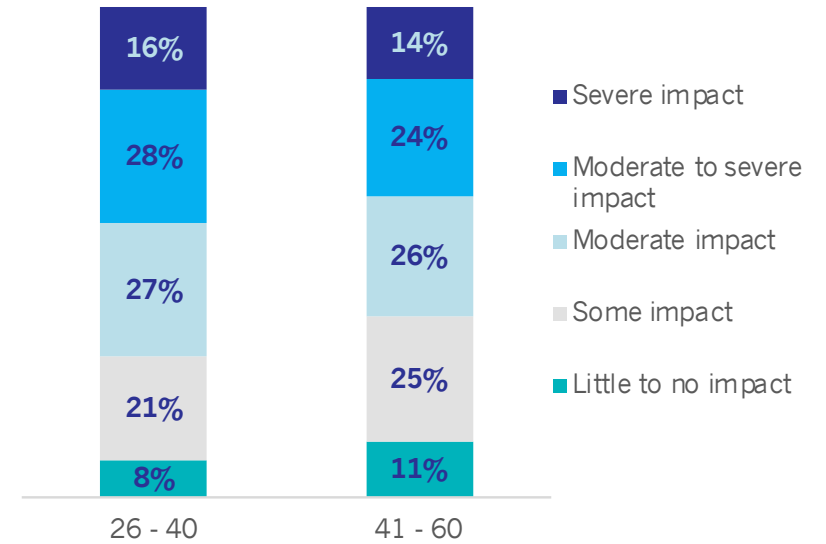
How do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as a result of disruptions from COVID-19? | By sex



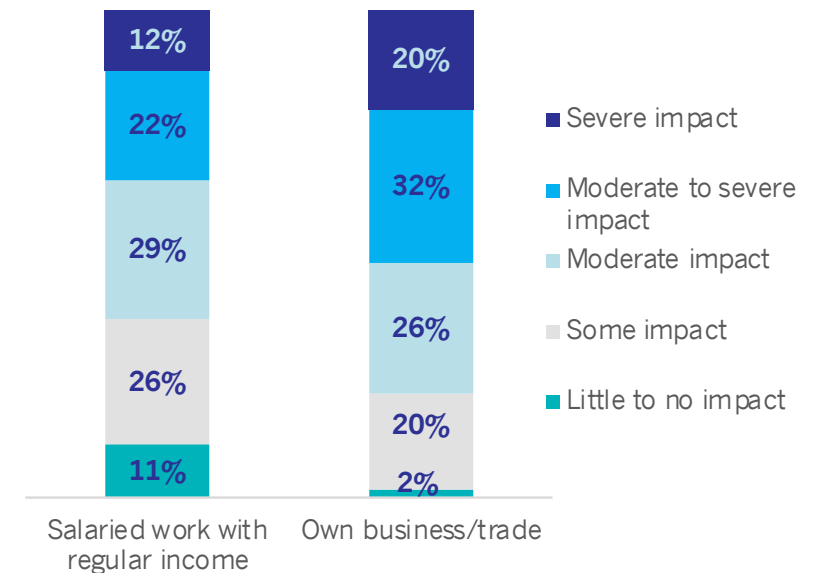
“Since I am essential service thus far I have had to work for almost 2 weeks straight and my job requires that I interact with many persons. So my exposure has potentially increased and the over working might have weakened my immunity.”

“Transportation to work has been a bit of a challenge “

Looking ahead, how do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as a result of disruptions from COVID-19? | By age



Looking ahead, how do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as result of disruptions from COVID-19? | By income sources

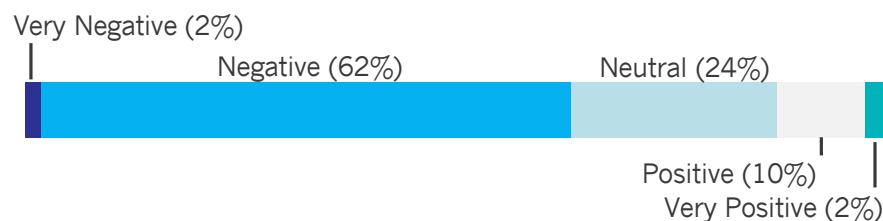


HOW PEOPLE ARE COPING AND ADAPTING

Respondents were provided space to give fuller and more nuanced insights on how they are coping and adapting to the disruptions caused by COVID-19. Out of the 535 respondents, 40% responded to the open-ended question resulting in a total count of 6,640 words.

An analysis of the responses by WFP Caribbean, in collaboration with Google's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Unit, was able to swiftly categorise and interpret the degree of positive and negative emotions within the responses using machine learning.

Distribution of sentiments across open-ended survey responses



62% of responses were classified as being negative with 24% classified as neutral. There was a higher percentage of positive responses (10%) compared to the regional average. Many of the respondents who participated in the survey are feeling anxiety and stress about ability to manage loan repayments, bills, and rent due to the uncertain outlook with job security, job loss and reduced incomes. Many respondents are adapting to the different restrictions for shopping by changing to delivery services and adjusting when and where they go to the markets/stores. A larger proportion (when compared to the region) have commented on their home gardens and expressed a conscious effort to buy local to reduce reliance on imported goods.

Very negative (2%)

"Affected mentally. All the bad news makes me more scared, when I have to go out I'm paranoid and jumpy. I have been stigmatized due to a chronic allergic cough"

"Living with fear and anxiety. Movement down to bare minimal... Very worried about visits to supermarkets and pharmacies phobia for travelling post covid 19 period"

Negative (62%)

"The psychological impact is affecting persons more than would be imagined.. General unwillingness to get tasks done. Fear to do simple everyday tasks. Because we live in a rural community, we are forced out to get ration and feed for animals. Persons are not buying as much or maybe finding them on the streets and in the markets is impossible."

Neutral (24%)

"Balancing working from home and schooling."

"Considering how certain work activities will be affected by this new normal"

"I'd like more critical base information to be given and understood. More PR. More fight for food security.....farmers are tired, we need the hungry citizens to join"

Positive (10%)

"I have learnt to be content"

"Less noise, less traffic, better ambiance, working from home, reading, writing"

"Spending time with family. Planted a vegetable garden. Eating only home cooked meals. Teaching 14 year to cook sew painting home and artwork"

Very Positive (2%)

"...Building family bonds and being a full time single parent to a five year old. Very rewarding to say the least."

"I'm doing with less. Appreciating the situation allows me to meditate and introspect... What is to come has to be met with calibrated action. Keeping my mind and emotions alive is of paramount importance."

CONCLUSION

This report contributes to a better picture of how COVID-19 and measures to contain the virus are impacting livelihoods, food security and access to markets in Trinidad and Tobago. Market access did not emerge as a major constraint, though nearly two-thirds of respondents reported that food prices have increased. How people make a living is being impacted, with widespread disruption to livelihoods already resulting in lost income, particularly for business owners and others not earning salaries.

The overall trends on market access, food consumption and livelihoods disruption were broadly consistent between men and women and the age groups analysed. However, more female respondents are facing loss of jobs or reduced salaries. More in-depth assessment and analysis on the wide-ranging economic and social impacts of COVID-19 will be critical to further inform responses to the unfolding crisis.

As noted in the regional survey report, it is essential to mitigate the disruptions to livelihoods, cushion the financial blow and ensure access to food. Local production should be galvanized to meet future demands and trade and supply chains must remain open, as outlined in the CARICOM COVID-19 Agri-Food Response and Mitigation Framework Document. At the same time, financial assistance and other resources to vulnerable populations should be expanded along the lines of plans and actions already underway to mitigate the economic impacts at the household level.

More responses from the survey

“It has been very disruptive in my family’s day to day life concern of what is next in terms of livelihood finances and payments of bills the uncertainty is the worst part”

“It’s hard on my family because my husband is the only one working and now with the current state of the country his salary was cut and it isn’t enough to cover food and other bills”

“Transformed part of the garden into a vegetable garden planting produce that can feed (melange, zucchini, pumpkin, okra, breadfruit tree, sweet potato) as opposed to seasonings.”

“Generally it has made me more appreciative in what I have. I am more aware of what is important for me. While I am anxious about earning to maintain myself, I am taking the opportunity of exploring different avenues of income.”

“Reduction in physical contact and limitations on travel has affected the quantity of ‘fresh’ food used and social contact with group outside immediate family.

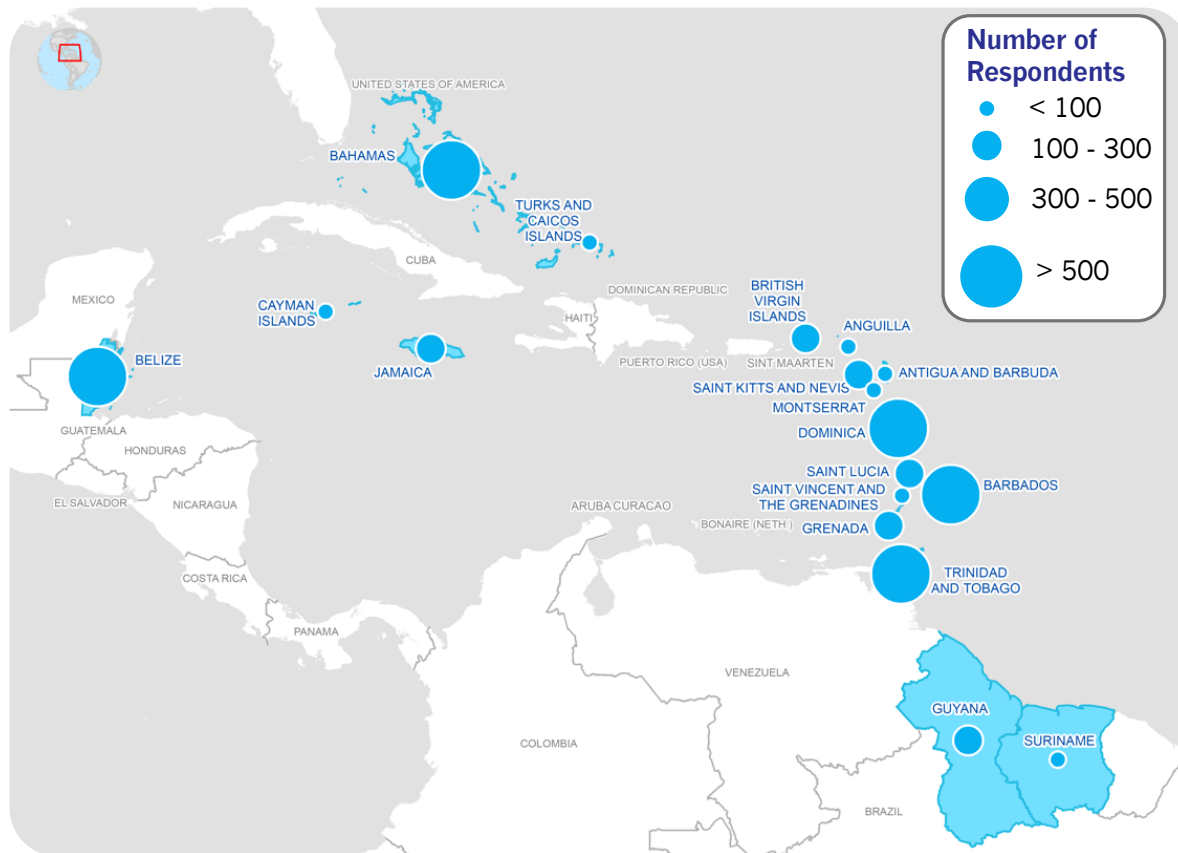
Greater use has been made of virtual means of communications such as WhatsApp, Zoom, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Increased family time has resulted in some increased stress but more so improved connections and useful building of family bonds.”

““We purchased additional seeds to supplement our seed bank. Purchased more veggies and meat and froze them.”

“I am not able to go to the gym to exercise and do my regular training.. And i cant visit my grandchildren. I cannot go to my dance classes and my interactive Spanish lessons. Zoom and skype is affected by internet dropping regularly”

ANNEX. REGIONAL SUMMARY KEY FINDINGS

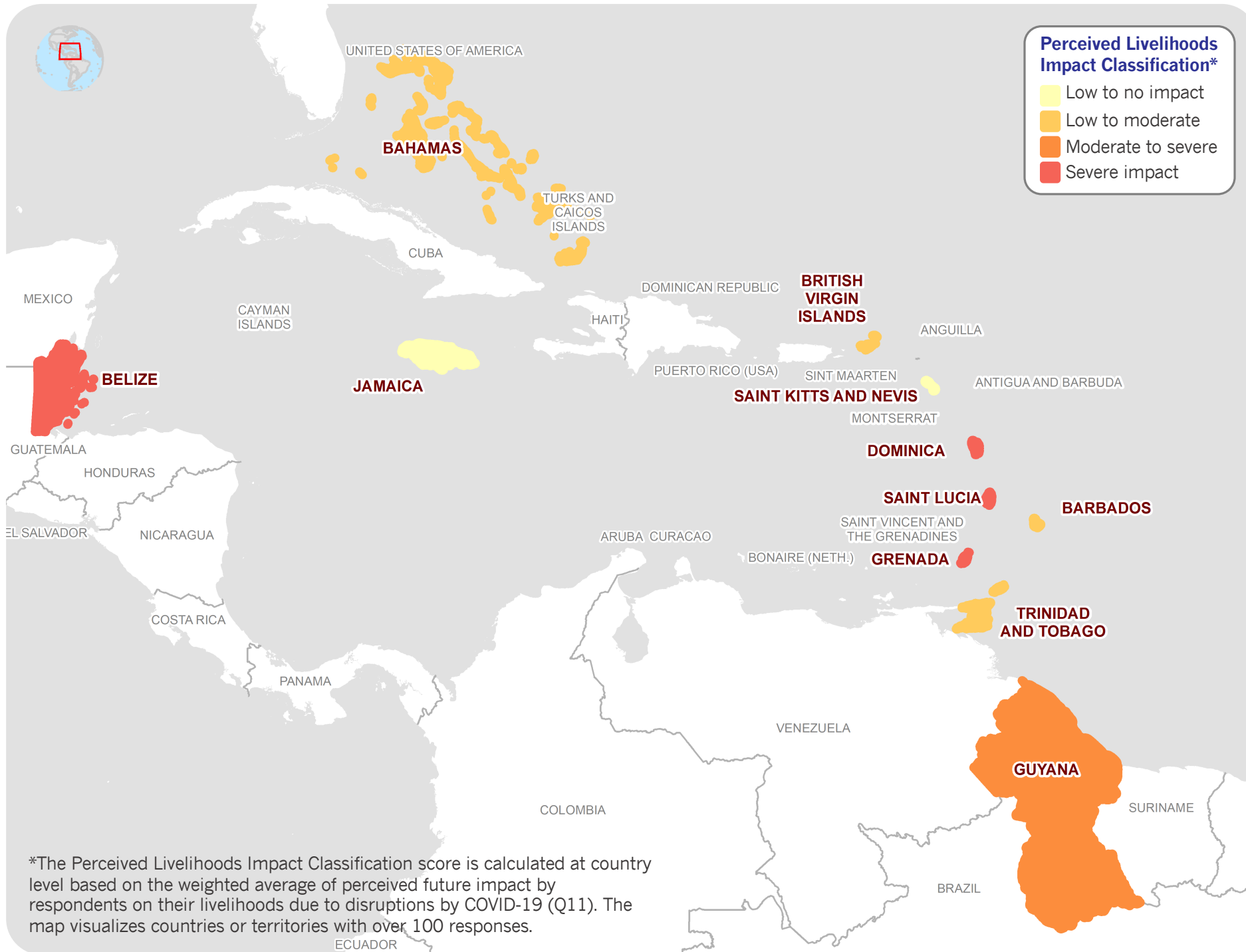
The COVID-19 pandemic is having far-reaching impacts on how people earn a living and meet critical needs. The Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey was launched by CARICOM to rapidly gather data on impacts to livelihoods, food security and access to markets. Prepared by the World Food Programme with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization, the survey link was shared via social media, email and media. This summary analyses data collected from 1-12 April 2020.



At a glance

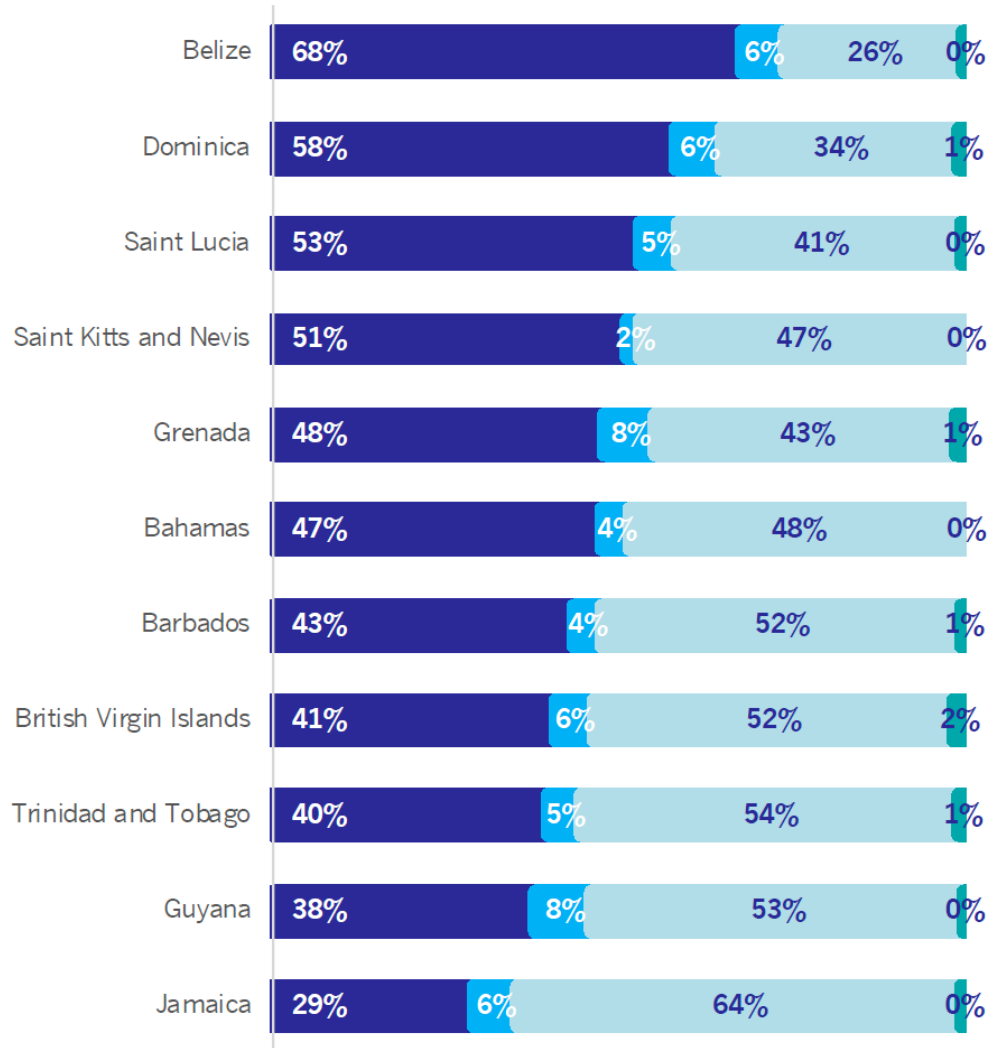
- COVID-19 has caused widespread disruption to livelihoods, driven primarily by movement restrictions and concerns about leaving the house.
- Half of respondents have faced a change in income, owing mainly to job loss or reduced revenue/salary. People owning businesses or engaged in casual labour or petty trade appear most impacted.
- Most respondents were able to access markets in the previous seven days but with substantial variations across the region. Those unable to do so cited movement restrictions, store closures and concerns about leaving the house.
- Availability of food, hygiene items and medicines appears to be less than normal, but very few respondents indicated that items were unavailable.
- People are changing how they shop, with most respondents purchasing larger quantities.
- Most respondents are not having difficulty eating enough, but some are eating less preferred foods.
- At the regional level, trends were broadly consistent between male and female respondents, though further country-level analysis may reveal greater gender differences.
- While the survey contributes to a better overview of impacts, the data is not representative, and the use of a web-based questionnaire limits inputs from those without connectivity.

ANNEX. PERCEIVED LIVELIHOODS IMPACT IN THE CARIBBEAN



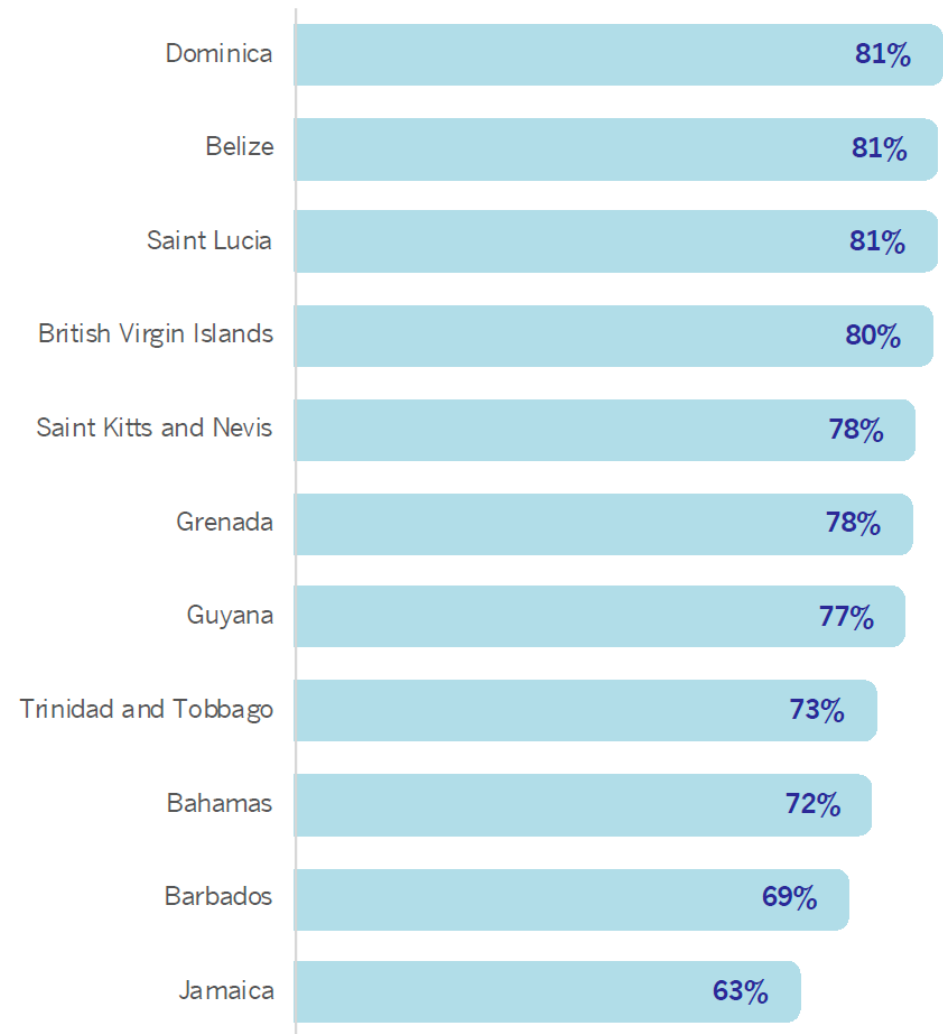
ANNEX. DETAILED FIGURES FOR COUNTRIES OR TERRITORIES (WITH >100 RESPONSES)

Income changes



- Loss of jobs or reduce salaries
- Had to resort to alternative income sources
- No changes
- Increased employment

% reporting disruptions to livelihoods



ANNEX. METHODOLOGY

The survey was launched via a webform, which was accessible on mobile/smartphone and PC/desktop. The data collection period was inclusive of 1-12 April 2020.

The survey was circulated widely via email, social media, media and other communication channels by participating ministries including (but not limited to) Ministries of Agriculture, Social Protection, National Disaster Management Organizations, UN agencies and NGO partners.

Responses were visualised live on an interactive dashboard and continually monitored to ensure their legitimacy based on cross referencing with prior knowledge and secondary data. Data validation methods were designed into the survey form to mitigate against intentional or unintentional outliers.

WFP Caribbean performed the data collection, monitoring and analysis. Data was analysed according to age groups and sex where there are sufficient responses.

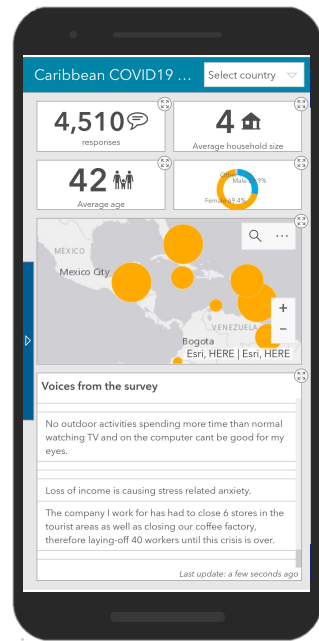
The qualitative analysis was performed in collaboration with Joseph Xu from Google's AI unit using Natural Language Processing (NLP). NLP, a branch of AI which analyses and interprets human languages, provided: (a) a sentiment analysis to determine the number of positive versus negative responses and (b) auto-categorisation of the responses. To moderate the non-representative nature of the data, the analysis team further refined the classifications presented by the algorithms.

National level reports are only produced for countries and territories with sufficient responses. Reports are prepared by WFP Caribbean: Amy Chong, Sarah Bailey, Francesca Ciardi, Elisaveta Gouretskaia and Nicholas Grainger.

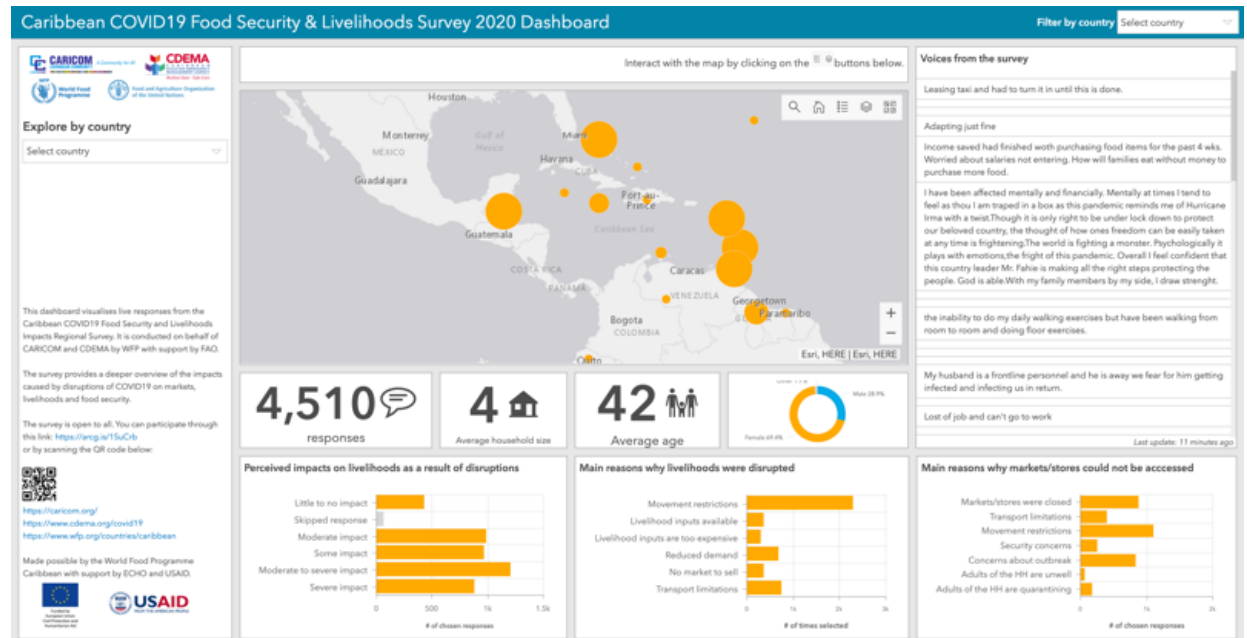
Survey (Closed)
<http://arcg.is/1SuCrb>



Dashboard for smartphones
<https://arcg.is/izn5H>



Dashboard for PC/laptop <http://arcg.is/Ca8X0>



ANNEX. QUESTIONNAIRE

Caribbean COVID-19 FS&L Survey

Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey



Thank you for taking part in this regional survey for the Caribbean. Your participation will play a large part in providing an overview of the impact of COVID-19 on food security and livelihoods in your country or territory.

Demographics

What is your age?

What is your sex?

 Female

 Male

What is the size of your household?

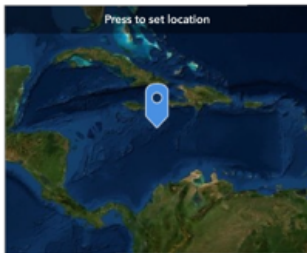
Please include all members currently living in your residence.

Which country do you live in?*

Location



Please click on the target icon on the map if you would like to provide a more accurate location.



Lat: 16.04150 Lon: -75.20324

Markets

1. In the past 7 days, has there been a time when you or your household could not access the markets/grocery stores?

 Yes No

What were the main reasons why you or your household could not access the markets/stores?

Please select all that apply.

- Markets/stores were closed
- Transport limitations
- Movement restrictions (eg. curfew)
- Security concerns
- Concerned about leaving the house due to outbreak
- Adult members of the household are unwell
- Members of household are self quarantining
- Other

2. Are fresh food items (eg. eggs, meat, vegetables) currently available in markets/stores?

- Always available
- Partially/ sometimes available
- Not available
- Don't know

3. Are basic food items (eg. bread, rice) currently available in markets/stores?

- Always available
- Partially/ sometimes available
- Not available
- Don't know

4. Are hygiene items (eg. soap, detergent) currently available for purchase in markets/stores?

- Always available
- Partially/ sometimes available
- Not available
- Don't know

5. Are essential medicines available in clinics or pharmacies?

- Always available
- Partially/ sometimes available
- Not available
- Don't know

6. Has there been any changes in the costs of food items over the past 2 weeks?

- Food prices have increased
- Food prices have decreased
- No changes

7. Have you changed your shopping behaviour compared to normal times?

- Yes
- No

How have you changed your shopping behaviour?

Please select all that apply.

- Buying larger quantities than usual
- Buying smaller quantities than usual
- Buying cheaper or less preferred foods than usual
- Going to different stores

Livelihoods

8. Was your ability to carry out livelihood activities affected in the past two weeks?

 Yes No

What were the main reasons for the disruptions to your livelihood activities?

Please select all that apply.

- Reduced demand for goods/services
- No market to sell products
- Transport limitations
- Movement restrictions (eg. curfew)
- Livelihoods inputs are unavailable
- Livelihoods inputs are too expensive or inaccessible
- Concerned about leaving the house due to outbreak
- Adult members of the household are unwell
- Increased demand for goods/services
- Other

9. Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks?

- Loss of jobs or reduced salaries/revenues
- Increased employment or increased salaries/revenues
- Resorted to secondary/alternative source of income to maintain income levels
- No change

10. What are your household's main income sources over the past year?

You may select up to 2 that apply.

- Salaried work with regular income
- Daily/casual labour
- Own business/trade
- Petty trade/selling on street
- Remittances from abroad
- Support from families and friends
- Government assistance/social safety nets
- Other

11. How do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as a result of disruptions from COVID-19?

- Little to no impact
- Some impact
- Moderate impact
- Moderate to severe impact
- Severe impact

12. Is your household currently engaged in farming/livestock raising?

- Yes. For consumption
- Yes. For sale
- Yes. For both sale and consumption
- No

Please select all that apply.

- Rice
- Corn
- Vegetables
- Pulses
- Banana/Plantains
- Poultry
- Small ruminants (eg. sheep, goat)
- Large ruminants (eg. cattle)
- Swine
- Other

13. Is your household currently engaged in fishing/coastal activities?

- Yes. For consumption
- Yes. For sale
- Yes. For both sale and consumption
- No

Please select all that apply.

- Small scale aquaculture
- Inland fisheries
- Marine/coastal fisheries
- Processing of fish/fisheries products
- Fishing gear production
- Mangrove/beach activities (eg. shellfish harvesting)
- Other

Food Security

14. Which statement best reflects your food situation over the past 7 days?

- I had no difficulties eating enough food (normal pattern)
- I ate less preferred foods
- I skipped meals or ate less than usual
- I went one whole day without eating
- I increased my food intake

15. Does your household have any food stock?

- Yes. Less than one week
- Yes. Less than 2 weeks
- Yes. Less than 3 weeks
- Yes. Less than 1 month
- Yes. More than 1 month
- No

General

Please provide any additional insights into how you have been affected by the disruptions from COVID19 and how you are adapting.

Do not provide any sensitive information.

Thank you for your participation! Please hit the Submit button.

Individual responses are anonymous. Overall survey results will be publicly available.

Submit

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